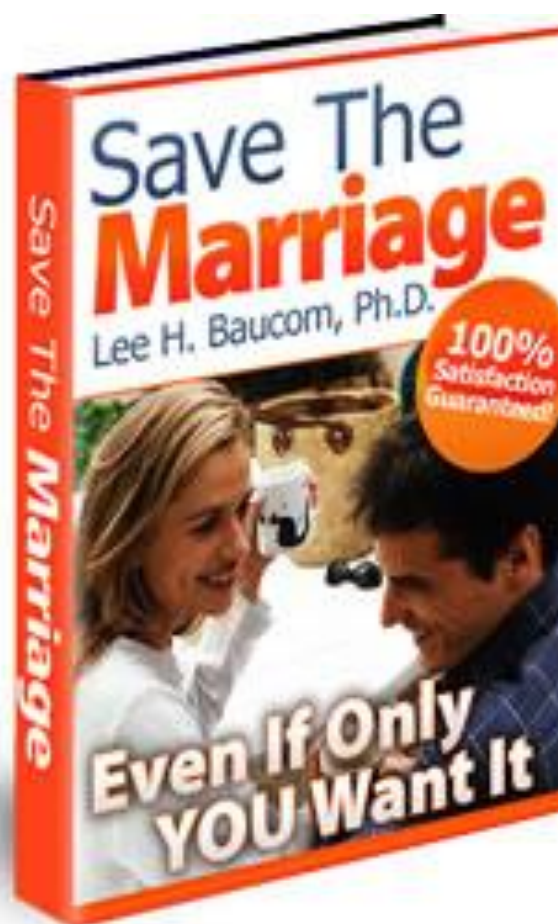


Save The Marriage

Lee H. Baucom, Ph.D.

Even If Only YOU Want It

Affiliate Report for Save the Marriage



Prepared Especially for Travis Sago's Affiliate Team

How to Get Your Clickbank ID

Step 1:

Sign up for your free [ClickBank ID & Account - here](#) to become an affiliate. ClickBank is a trusted affiliate network, and a global leader in selling digital products.

Step 2:

Copy the Affiliate Hop Link below and *replace* **XXXXXX** with your ClickBank Affiliate ID.

<http://XXXXXX.savmarriag.hop.clickbank.net/>

For more help on setting this up, please visit the following ClickBank webpage: <http://www.clickbank.com/help/affiliate-help/>

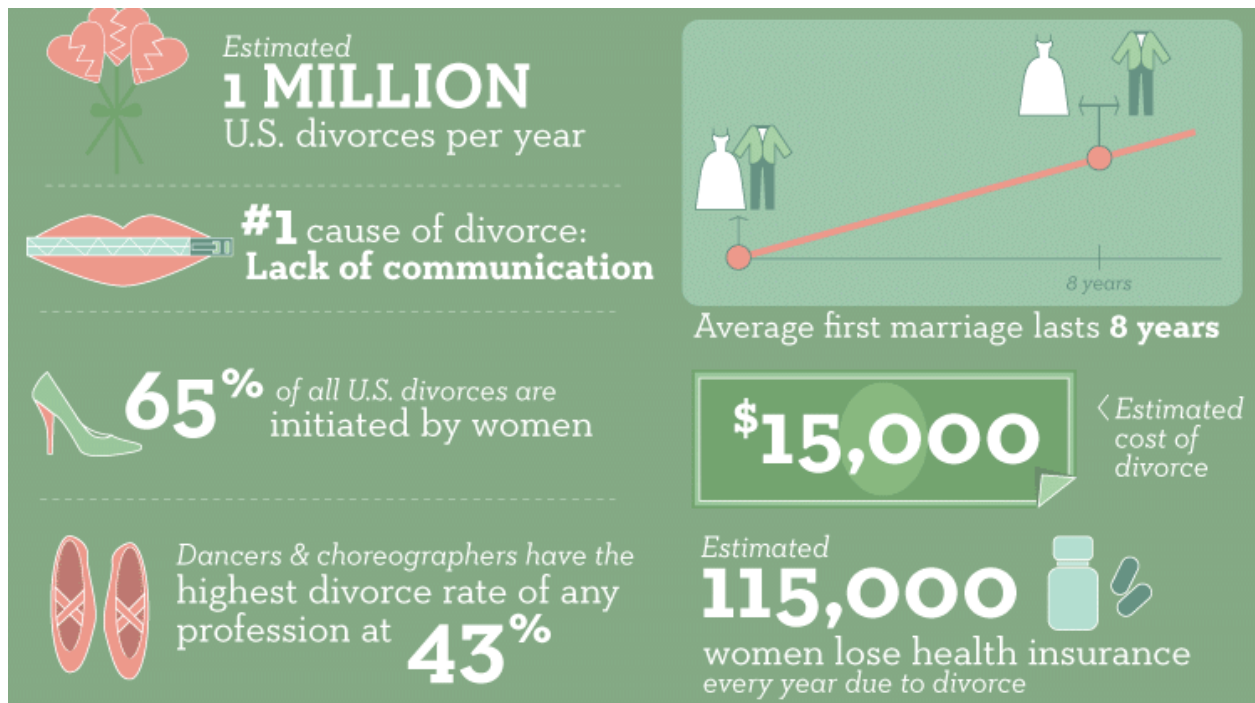
Step 3:

Send people to the **Save the Marriage** site through your affiliate link (above), and once a purchase has been made, ClickBank will take care of the rest!

ClickBank handles all of the sales, therefore you can be sure every sale you generate is *tracked* and *accounted* for. Like clock-work, ClickBank will mail you a check (or direct deposit) for a massive 65% of every sale, every 14 days. SO easy!

Let's get started!

Consider the following facts:



Even though the divorce rate in the US has declined since its spike in the 1980s, it still remains quite high. Fortunately, this is one area in which the US does not lead the world. Other countries around the world have even higher divorce rates.

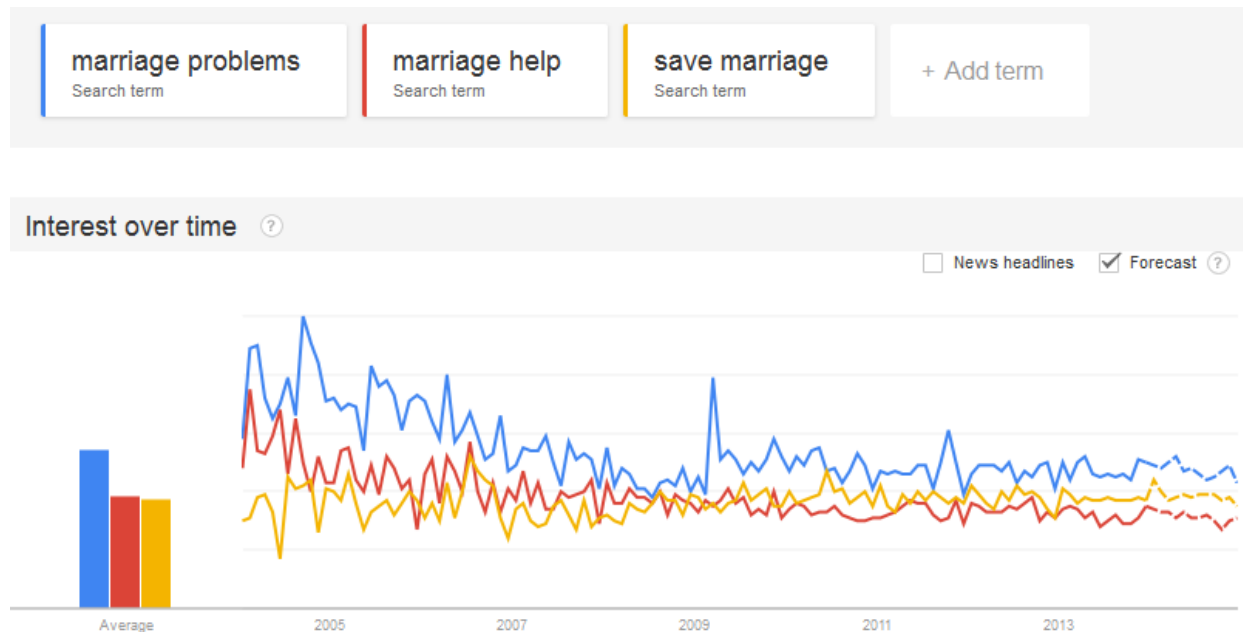
There are some marriages that both spouses recognize as a mistake, and agree that a divorce is the only feasible option. These can result in an amicable split and sometimes the couple even enjoys a friendship following the divorce.

Unfortunately, that is not the norm. Most divorces are painful, emotionally and financially stressful and can be even more difficult if children are involved.

Many times only one person wants the divorce and the other partner still wants to do everything possible to save the marriage. But the general belief has always been that a relationship cannot be saved unless both people want to save it.

Lee Baucom, the author and developer of **Save the Marriage**, says that thinking is just plain wrong and he has thousands of marriages he's helped bring back from the brink of divorce to back up his claim.

This image from Google trends shows you how much interest has been consistently shown for several years for just 3 keywords related to marital issues. The dotted lines at the end show Google's forecast for the continued direction of the trend.



In the affiliate marketing world, there are select niches that are **lucrative**, **evergreen** and deeply **vertical**. These are thought to be ideal niches for affiliate marketers, and most can be found within 3 very broad groups; Health, Wealth and Relationships.

Almost any niche you find to promote to in any of these 3 groups is considered an ideal niche; one that is lucrative, evergreen and vertical. Save the Marriage falls under the Relationships category, making it one of those ideal niches.

You can see from the graph that it's evergreen. People are searching for solutions to marriage problems all year long.

Relationship repair is well-known as a lucrative niche, both online and off. Sessions with a marriage counselor can run as high as \$200/hour. Many people look online for more affordable solutions.

It's also a vertical niche, with many possibilities of sub-niches to choose from. You could focus on couples with or without children, older couples or younger ones, first marriages or couples on their second or third...the list really could go on and on.

The important thing to remember about **Save the Marriage** is that it is not designed to be a "get your ex back" type of program.

This program is specifically designed to be helpful to married couples who are still in the marriage, but are having seemingly irreconcilable problems and seem to be heading down the path to divorce.

These are the folks you can help.



Why You Should Promote **Save the Marriage**

- ♥ This is a product you can be proud to promote. You are truly doing something significant to help troubled couples turn their lives around and you can earn 65% of every \$47.00 sale made through your affiliate link.
- ♥ **Save the Marriage** has been around since 2001, and was written by an expert in the field, not by an Internet marketer. It was written for the purpose of saving marriages, not just to have an ebook to sell.
- ♥ The return rates are extremely low, which always speaks well of a product's effectiveness. If it didn't work, the refund rate would reflect that.
- ♥ Conversion rates are incredibly good, with testing showing a range of 2%-26%, depending on keywords, advertising methods, etc.
- ♥ The product offers excellent value for the money. The entire system consists of 5 modules, 2 audio recordings, a bonus ebook and some bonus reports as well as a free email consultation for the customer.

- ♥ There's also an upsell offered of the "Transform Your Marriage Workshop", described at <http://transformyourmarriage.com>. About 18% of buyers also choose to purchase this upsell. That adds even more to your affiliate commission since it pays 60% of the \$97.00 price.
- ♥ Lee and his team really do everything in their power to try to help couples save their marriage and they'll do the same thing for you to try to help you make money.
- ♥ Helpful promotional materials are available for affiliates of Save the Marriage. A list of keywords to get you started is provided at the end of this report. You'll find additional resources such as product images, banner ads, articles and more in the affiliates' area [here](#).

Tips To Help You Make Money Promoting Save The Marriage

1. First, I need to tell you something that's VERY important to your success. There are really only 3 steps involved in making money online:

1. Find a STARVING CROWD
2. Get your butt in front of that crowd.
3. IMPORTANT: **KEEP** your butt planted there.

Please, please, PLEASE...do NOT make the mistake that so many affiliates make by sending your starving crowd directly to the vendor's sales page.

If you link directly to the merchant, you're not paying any attention at all to Step 3...keeping YOUR butt in front of your crowd.

You're putting **his** site in front of that hungry market.

Just don't do it.

It doesn't matter if you're writing articles, buying solo ads, doing PPC...you want any and all of those links to point to a site YOU control, because that automatically puts **you** in control of the traffic. And the more you can control traffic...the more sales you'll have and the more consistent they'll be.

Send traffic to the sales page, of course, but make sure they stop by your site first!

2. It can be incredibly helpful to spend a little time hanging out where your market is hanging out. Go to Google and type marriage problems forum (or save my marriage, marital issues, or any other descriptive term).

You'll find loads of sites where people are seeking out comfort and solutions from others who are going through the same thing or can relate to the issues they're dealing with.

You can even put another word at the start of your search phrase to make your results even more specific to a particular sub-niche. For instance, typing in second marriage problems forum or mixed marriage problems forum will give different results from the first search phrase.

So you can experiment with trying out different types of search phrases to give you numerous sites you can visit to find out exactly what your target market is actually asking for help with.

3. There are a number of proven, very successful ways to drive traffic to your site. You could probably name some yourself...and perhaps you already have a favorite method you've tested and found most effective. Here's a few suggestions to help get your brain juices flowing.

- ✿ Forums
- ✿ Newsletters
- ✿ Solo ads
- ✿ PPC
- ✿ Blog review sites
- ✿ Strategic use of your affiliate link
- ✿ Articles
- ✿ Videos
- ✿ Classified ads
- ✿ Banner ads
- ✿ Social Media
- ✿ Email
- ✿ SEO Methods (Ranking your site well)
- ✿ Offline

Some of the traffic driving methods listed above are paid, others can be used with little or no cost involved. Regardless of the method you use, if you focus on sending the most targeted traffic possible, you *greatly* increase your odds of making some *significant* cash.

If you're on a tight budget, you can start with a Squidoo lens, Hubpages, Blogger.com or Weebly.com. You can find other free platforms as well with a little research.



You can use the keywords I'm providing or do some digging around on your own to come up with others.

After you have some sales rolling in, you can branch out and set up your **own** site, hire some article writers (like you can find at Iwriter.com) and then do some PPC and other forms of paid advertising. The key is to be consistent and keep on ramping it up. You can do \$100 a day...or \$1000 a day...it's up to you.

4. Be sure to take full advantage of all the affiliate tools and resources that the Save the Marriage team is providing. At the end of this report, you'll find the Affiliate Toolbox section that includes a keyword list, banner ads, images and articles, all designed to help you generate traffic and increase sales.

5. Keep your customer's needs in mind. Be sure to address their specific questions and concerns in your marketing messages.

By offering your customers a solution to exactly what's troubling them, you'll become their hero, and your chances of getting the sale literally skyrocket!

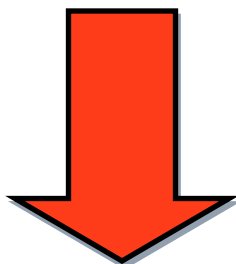
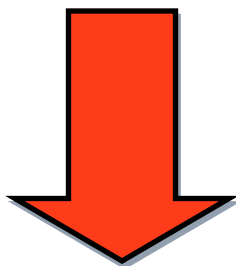
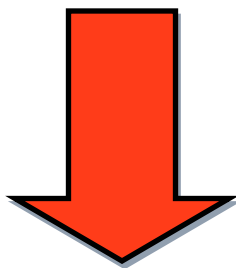
Summing It Up

1. Get in front of a starving crowd. Write a few articles (or rewrite some of the ones provided for you) and see if you can make some sales.
2. When you start making sales, it's crucial to get YOUR butt in front of them, on YOUR sites. It's great to start out with Squidoo or Blogger, but you don't own them and can't control what they do, so don't depend on them any longer than absolutely necessary.
3. Then, if you're serious about generating DAY JOB KILLING income...you've got to stay in front of these folks, build a relationship with them and do what most others won't...give up a few Saturday afternoons and spend a few late nights getting it all set up.

And always remember...*I'm rooting for ya!*

Now go ahead and scroll on down to get to the goodies in your affiliate toolbox!

Travis





I've provided some keywords to get you going, but please don't limit yourself to just what's here. The important thing is to try to think like your perfect prospect.

Keep in mind there's a person behind each and every one of these keywords. Become your customer...get into his head and pay attention to the conversation he has with himself. Write down the questions and problems that would be on your mind if you were in his shoes. That will give you some of your best phrases.

Root Keyword: save marriage

Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4
broken marriage	880	how to save my relationship	720
can my marriage be saved	320	how to save relationship	320
can this marriage be saved	880	how to save your marriage	3600
christian marriage counseling	4400	how to save your marriage alone	390
christian marriage counselling	390	how to save your relationship	1600
christian marriage help	260	how to stop a divorce	880
counseling for couples	390	how to stop divorce	480
counselling for couples	260	is my marriage worth saving	390
couple counseling	1900	marital counseling	1300
couple counselling	880	marital counselling	320
couples counseling	6600	marital issues	390
couples counselling	2900	marriage counseling	390
couples therapist	390	marriage counselling	320
divorce counseling	1000	marriage counseling	260
divorce counselling	260	marriage counseling books	480
divorce marriage	260	marriage counseling online	480
does marriage counseling work	1900	marriage counseling questions	1600
failing marriage	590	marriage counseling tips	390
fix my marriage	320	marriage counselling	9900

Column5	Column6	Column7	Column8
help my marriage	320	marriage crisis	390
how can i save my marriage	590	marriage difficulties	260
how do i save my marriage	590	marriage help	2900
how to avoid divorce	590	marriage help books	390
how to fix a marriage	1600	marriage in trouble	390
how to fix my marriage	880	marriage issues	1000
how to fix your marriage	880	marriage problem	320
how to improve marriage	320	marriage problems	6600
how to improve your marriage	590	marriage relationship	480
how to rekindle a marriage	1300	marriage restoration	590
how to repair a marriage	320	marriage trouble	590
how to save a failing marriage	320	my marriage is failing	480
how to save a marriage	4400	save the marriage today	0
how to save a relationship	3600	save your relationship	260
how to save marriage	880	saving a marriage	880
how to save my marriage	3600	saving a relationship	480
marriage counselling questions	260	saving marriage	390
marriage counsellor	880	saving my marriage	390
marriage counselor	6600	saving your marriage	720
marriage counselors	1300	second marriage problems	320
		stop divorce	590
		stop your divorce	480
		unhappy marriage	5400
		ways to save your marriage	260

Root keyword: marriage help

Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4
broken marriage	880	marriage difficulties	260
christian marriage help	260	marriage guidance	2400
christian marriage retreat	260	marriage help	2900
christian marriage retreats	880	marriage help books	390
christian relationship advice	1300	marriage in trouble	390
common marriage problems	390	marriage information	260
communication in marriage	1600	marriage issues	1000
communication problems in relationships	260	marriage problem	320
counselling for couples	260	marriage problems	6600
couple counselling	880	marriage problems signs	260
couples counselling	2900	marriage separation	2900
divorce advice	5400	marriage separation advice	260
divorce counselling	260	marriage trouble	590
divorce help	1000	my marriage sucks	390
early marriage problems	320	problems in marriage	480
fix my marriage	320	problems in relationships	390
help my marriage	320	relationship breakdown	880
how can i save my marriage	590	relationship help	3600
how do i save my marriage	590	relationship issues	2400
how to fix a marriage	1600	relationship problem	320
how to fix a relationship	4400	relationship problems	14800
how to fix my marriage	880	relationship trouble	390
how to fix your marriage	880	relationships advice	1900
how to save a marriage	4400	relationships problems	590
how to save a relationship	3600	save a marriage	260
how to save marriage	880	save a relationship	260
how to save my marriage	3600	save marriage	880
how to save my relationship	720	save my marriage today	720
how to save your marriage	3600	save my relationship	260
how to save your relationship	1600	save the marriage	320
how to stop a divorce	880	save your relationship	260
how to stop divorce	480	saving a marriage	880
infidelity in marriage	1000	saving marriage	390
marital counselling	320	saving my marriage	390
marital issues	390	saving your marriage	720
marital strife	480	second marriage	6600
marriage breakdown	1000	second marriage problems	320
marriage breakup	320	second marriages	590
marriage communication	720	signs a marriage is over	590

Root keyword: marriage problems

Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4
broken marriage	880	marriage in trouble	390
cheating in marriage	260	marriage issues	1000
common marriage problems	390	marriage on the rocks	720
divorce marriage	260	marriage problem	320
help my marriage	320	marriage problems	6600
how to fix a marriage	1600	marriage reconciliation	390
how to fix marriage	260	marriage sucks	1300
how to fix my marriage	880	marriage trouble	590
how to fix relationship problems	320	problems in marriage	480
how to fix your marriage	880	relationship breakdown	880
how to save a marriage	4400	relationship help	3600
how to save a relationship	3600	relationship issues	2400
how to save marriage	880	relationship problems	14800
how to save my marriage	3600	relationship questions	9900
how to save your marriage	3600	relationships problems	590
how to save your relationship	1600	save a marriage	260
how to solve relationship problems	260	save marriage	880
how to stop a divorce	880	save my marriage today	720
infidelity in marriage	1000	save my relationship	260
love problems	1600	save the marriage	320
marital advice	590	save your relationship	260
marital conflict	390	saving a marriage	880
marital issues	390	saving marriage	390
marital strife	480	saving my marriage	390
marriage difficulties	260	saving your marriage	720
marriage encounter	4400	second marriage problems	320
marriage help	2900	stable marriage problem	880
marriage help books	390	stop divorce	590
		unhappy marriage	5400

Root keyword: stop divorce

Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4
divorce paperwork	880	how to divorce in uk	320
divorce petition	1600	how to divorce your husband	590
divorce procedure	1900	how to divorce your wife	720
divorce proceedings	1000	how to file a divorce	480
divorce process	5400	how to file for divorce	8100
divorce process in california	480	how to fix a marriage	1600
divorce questions	720	how to fix my marriage	880
divorce quotes	8100	how to fix your marriage	880
divorce rate	8100	how to get a divorce	8100
divorce rates	4400	how to get divorce	720
divorce rights	480	how to get divorced	2900
divorce separation	390	how to improve your marriage	590
divorce settlements	1600	how to prevent divorce	320
divorce statistics	12100	how to save a marriage	4400
divorce support	1000	how to save a relationship	3600
divorce uk	2400	how to save marriage	880
divorce with children	1000	how to save my marriage	3600
early marriage problems	320	how to save my relationship	720
easy divorce	1300	how to save relationship	320
failing marriage	590	how to save your marriage	3600
family law divorce	260	how to save your relationship	1600
file for divorce	1300	how to start a divorce	390
filing for a divorce	260	how to stop a divorce	880
filing for divorce	2400	how to stop divorce	480
fix my marriage	320	i want a divorce	2400
florida divorce	1900	illinois divorce	720
get a divorce	480	infidelity in marriage	1000
get divorced	390	international divorce	480
getting a divorce	2900	lawyer divorce	390
getting divorced	2400	legal aid divorce	1600
going through a divorce	720	legal divorce	260
grounds for divorce	6600	legal separation vs divorce	1300
happy marriage tips	480	life after divorce	3600
help my marriage	320	marital counselling	320
help with divorce	260	marital issues	390
homer mcdonald	390	marital separation	720
how do i get divorced	320	marital strife	480
how to avoid divorce	590	marriage and divorce	1300
how to cope with divorce	1900	marriage annulment	3600

Column5	Column6
marriage builders	5400
marriage counseling	390
marriage counselling	320
marriage counseling	260
marriage counsellor	880
marriage counselors	1300
marriage crisis	390
marriage devotional	260
marriage difficulties	260
marriage divorce	590
marriage guidance	2400
marriage help	2900
marriage help books	390
marriage in trouble	390
marriage issues	1000
marriage problem	320
marriage problems	6600
marriage problems signs	260
marriage questions	880
marriage relationship	480
marriage retreat	3600
marriage retreats	1600
marriage seminars	720
marriage separation	2900
marriage tips	1900
marriage trouble	590
mediation divorce	480
men and divorce	320
michele weiner davis	880
military divorce	1900
my husband wants a divorce	590
my wife wants a divorce	880
no fault divorce	4400
pa divorce laws	590
petition for divorce	590
pre marital counselling	590
premarital counselling	320
problems in marriage	480
process of divorce	390

Root keyword: marital issues

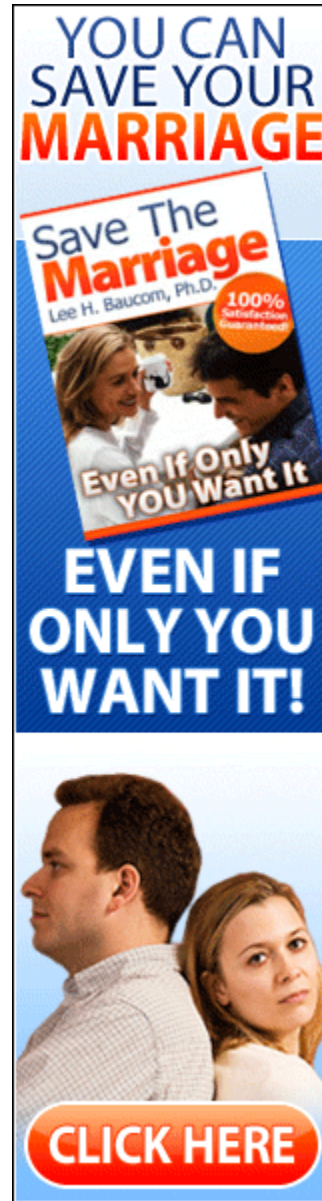
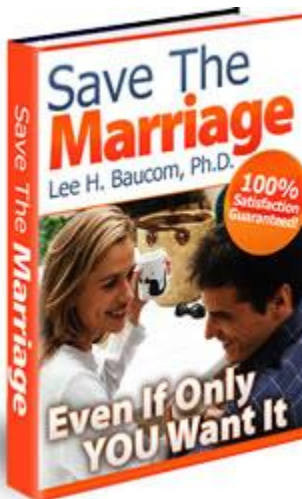
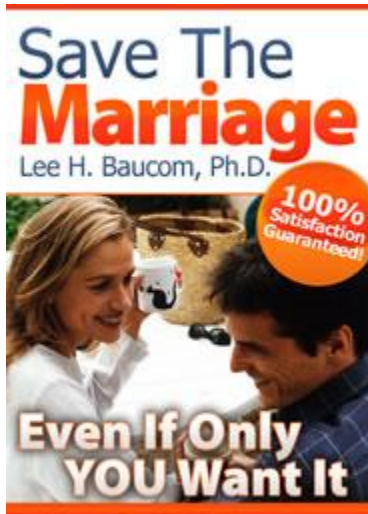
Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4
advice for marriage	260	marriage counsellor	880
advice on marriage	390	marriage crisis	390
advice on relationships	720	marriage difficulties	260
books on marriage	880	marriage guidance	2400
broken marriage	880	marriage guide	320
christian marriage advice	1300	marriage help	2900
christian marriage help	260	marriage help books	390
common marriage problems	390	marriage in trouble	390
communication in marriage	1600	marriage issues	1000
communication problems in relationships	260	marriage on the rocks	720
divorce advice	5400	marriage problem	320
early marriage problems	320	marriage problems	6600
family issues	2400	marriage problems after baby	390
fix my marriage	320	marriage problems signs	260
help my marriage	320	marriage questions	880
how to fix a marriage	1600	marriage reconciliation	390
how to fix my marriage	880	marriage relationship	480
how to fix your marriage	880	marriage seminars	720
how to save a marriage	4400	marriage separation	2900
how to save a relationship	3600	marriage separation advice	260
how to save marriage	880	marriage statistics	4400
how to save my marriage	3600	marriage sucks	1300
how to save your marriage	3600	marriage tips	1900
how to save your relationship	1600	marriage today	5400
how to solve relationship problems	260	marriage trouble	590
how to stop a divorce	880	my marriage sucks	390
infidelity in marriage	1000	problems in marriage	480
love advice	5400	problems in relationships	390
love problems	1600	questions about marriage	260
marital advice	590	relationship advice for women	6600
marital conflict	390	relationship advise	480
marital issues	390	relationship breakdown	880
marital strife	480	relationship counsellor	390
marriage and divorce	1300	relationship help	3600
marriage breakdown	1000	relationship issues	2400
marriage breakup	320	relationship problem	320
marriage communication	720	relationship problems	14800
marriage counseling	390	relationship trouble	390

Column5	Column6
save a marriage	260
save marriage	880
save my marriage today	720
save my relationship	260
save the marriage	320
save your relationship	260
saving a marriage	880
saving marriage	390
saving my marriage	390
saving your marriage	720
second marriage problems	320
stop divorce	590

Root keyword: troubled marriage

Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4
adultery in marriage	260	marriage after infidelity	390
adultery laws	1000	marriage crisis	390
can a marriage survive infidelity	260	marriage difficulties	260
can my marriage be saved	320	marriage in trouble	390
causes of infidelity	390	marriage infidelity	260
christian marriage help	260	marriage relationship	480
dealing with infidelity	880	marriage separation	2900
emotional infidelity	2400	marriage trouble	590
getting over infidelity	590	prayer for troubled marriage	260
healing from infidelity	320	recovering from infidelity	590
how to cope with infidelity	320	save my marriage today	720
how to save a marriage	4400	saving a marriage	880
how to save my marriage	3600	saving marriage	390
how to save your marriage	3600	saving my marriage	390
how to survive infidelity	390	saving your marriage	720
husband cheating signs	390	signs of a cheating spouse	590
infidelity and divorce	260	signs of infidelity	1300
infidelity in marriage	1000	signs your marriage is in trouble	590
infidelity signs	720	troubled marriage	480
infidelity statistics	1900	troubled relationship	390
marital infidelity	590	wife infidelity	390

Images/Banners





Articles

ARTICLE 1

Title: How to Save Your Marriage

Each year in America alone, nearly 1 million marriages end in divorce. This is an incredible number! That would be as if all the citizens of Houston Texas were divorced (each divorce leaves 2 people).

The question is how many of those marriages could be saved. Unfortunately, that is an invisible number. If your marriage stays together, it is hard to find in the statistics. As Marian Wright Edelman wrote, statistics are stories with the tears washed off.

Can your marriage be saved? If I could answer that, I would be a wealthy man. I can tell you that if your marriage is in trouble and you do nothing, the outcome is guaranteed. If you do something, there is a much better chance that your marriage will be saved.

And I can tell you, in four simple steps what you can do to save your marriage. You can start right now. But you must understand that I said "simple." That is not the same as "easy." These steps are not easy. They do, however, give you a path that you must follow if you want to change the destiny of a marriage in trouble.

Here are the 4 steps:

1) Quit the blame game. Stop blaming your spouse and stop blaming yourself. This is the first step because marriages get frozen into a pattern of blame that immobilizes any prospect of progress. Instead, the momentum gets dragged down and down.

Blame is our way of avoiding seeing ourselves clearly. It is much easier to point the finger somewhere and say "It's their fault." But in marriage, you can just as easily turn that pointing finger on yourself and place the blame there, saying "it's all my fault."

Unfortunately, blame feels good in the short-term, but in the long-term, it prevents any shift or change. So, even if you can make a long list of why you or your spouse should be blamed, forget it. Even if that list is factual, it will not help you put your marriage back together. Blame is the fuel of divorces.

2) Take responsibility. Decide you can do something. Change always begins with one person who wants to see a change. Understand that taking responsibility is not the same as taking the blame (see above).

Instead, blame is saying "regardless of who is at fault, there are some things I can do differently, and I am going to do them." What buttons do you allow your spouse to push? What buttons do you push with your spouse? Decide not to allow those buttons to be pushed and stop pushing the buttons.

What amazes me in my counseling is that everyone knows what they should be doing or not doing. But it is difficult to move in that direction. Don't be caught in that. Decide that you will take action.

The difference between blame and responsibility is this: if I am in a burning building, I can stand around trying to figure out who started the blaze, why it has spread so quickly, and who I am going to sue when it is over (blame), or I can get myself and anyone else I can out of that building (taking responsibility). When a marriage is in trouble, the house is on fire. How will you take action to save the marriage?

3) Get resources from experts. If others have been helped, you can be, too. Experts with a great deal more perspective and experience can be a real help in these situations. Do your research and divide the useless from the useful, then take advantage of the useful.

Don't assume that your situation is so different from every other situation. I can tell you that after 20-some years of providing therapy, not too much new comes through my doors. Don't get me wrong; the story changes, but the dynamics are the same.

Remember what Albert Einstein said, "The significant problems we have cannot be solved at the same level of thinking with which we created them." In other words, what got you into trouble will not get you out of trouble. That requires a whole new level of thinking. And that is what you get from an outside expert, someone with a fresh perspective.

4) Take action. More damage is done by doing nothing by taking a misstep. It is too easy to get paralyzed by the situation. Therapists often talk about "analysis paralysis." This occurs when people get so caught up in their churning thoughts and attempts to "figure things out" that they never take action.

It is not enough to simply understand what is causing the problem. You must then act! On a daily basis, I find people coming to my office with the belief that if they can just understand their problem, it will resolve itself. That simply does not happen. Resolution of the situation takes action.

Will your marriage be saved? If you follow my suggestions, you have infinitely more opportunity for saving your marriage than if you do nothing. Marriage is one of those places where it takes two to make it work, but only one to really mess things up. You can only do your part, but many times, that is enough. Resolve not to ask the question but to begin to act.

Are you ready to take action? Grab the best-selling resource on the internet for saving marriages: Save the Marriage, Even If Only You Want It! You can find it at <http://www.SaveTheMarriage.com>

ARTICLE 2

Title: The Myth of Marriage

Part of the difficulty with marriage is that the only training we get is "on the job." Rarely do you say to someone, "I want you to go work with those tools in there. Have fun, get the job done, and don't kill yourself." But, essentially, that is the start of a marriage. We have some rudimentary skills from relating to others, but the real knowledge and skills are hard-earned.

And the problem is, sometimes we learn lessons that are incorrect, or at least only partially true. These become the myths of our marriages. They are the stories we tell to ourselves in attempts to understand. Unfortunately, they are only partially right, at best. Often, they are totally wrong. Once we learn the stories, we refuse to give them up.

I've chosen 5 of the most common myths of marriage. You can decide if you tell yourself these stories, and if so, what you might be missing. Because, you see, the stories we tell ourselves determine how we act and what we assume. And that, ultimately, can either teach you to use the tools or allow you to injure yourself.

MYTH: "Marriage shouldn't be this hard." Lie this leads to: "If it is, maybe we shouldn't be married."

This is a powerful story about marriage. People assume that good marriages are easy, and there is no struggle. There is the romantic belief that good relationships "just work." Science has yet to discover a perpetual energy machine, and I doubt relationships are any different.

This summer, I was at a beach that hosts the annual sea turtle nesting. The large mother sea turtle lumbers up the beach, just above the high-tide mark, right at the base of the sand dunes, digs a hole some 18 inches into the ground, and lays a large group of eggs. Those eggs are left to develop and hatch, usually a couple of months later.

Now, here's the interesting thing: those tiny turtles (maybe 3 inches long) have to make the long trek from the nest to the sea. The long trek for the mother turtle is very long for the baby turtle. Some people have felt bad for the turtles in the past, and decided to help them to the surf.

By being picked up and carried to the surf, the "helpers" insured the death of the baby turtles. You see, that long trek to the sea builds the muscles in the flippers of the baby turtle. Those muscles are all that ensure the survival of the babies.

Some struggle (not too much) is necessary for developing the muscles of survival. It is true with relationships, and certainly true with marriage. When we struggle together, we develop the skills necessary to take on other struggles.

The real task is not to have a marriage that is easy. The real task is to learn how to allow the struggle to move you together, not push you apart. The statistics are pretty clear. Almost half of all marriages end in divorce. However, the hidden statistic is that 100% of marriages have difficulties. Staying married is not from a lack of difficulties, it is from using the difficulties to learn and develop.

ARTICLE 3

Title: Marriage: Learning To Love

My daughter was recently in her school's performance of Fiddler on the Roof. She was one of the daughters. If you don't know the story, it focuses on the changing culture of marriage, from one where the marriage is arranged by family and community to one based on mutual attraction.

In one of the songs, the main character asks his wife if she loves him. She replies that for 25 years, she has shared his bed, made his meals, tended his house, raised his children -- so what kind of question is that? The point is that in their relationship, love wasn't even a question or consideration. But after some back-and-forth, they decide that, indeed, they love each other.

This led me to think about what I know about marriage. And here is what I think about the question of love and marriage: we fall in love to get together, and then spend the rest of our lives learning to love the other.

You see, the initial attraction is really about "I." "I" feel a certain way, so I know I am "in love." But that part of the relationship is driven by my need to feel that way, my need to be with the other person, my need to have my needs met. My needs are fueled by my desire to feel the intense emotion of "being in love."

But in reality, love is a verb, something I do for the other. So, it takes the rest of my life to learn how to attend to my spouse's needs. From my desire to be with my spouse comes my desire to meet my spouse's love needs.

We are "fooled" into commitment by the overwhelming feeling of attraction, and then we have to put forth effort to create a sustained relationship. I say "fooled" because our culture has us believing that this love is the foundation of a relationship. It is not. It is merely a temporary starting point. It is not the destination. It is just a part of the journey to a lifetime relationship.

Those intense feelings will calm over time. The overwhelming need to be with someone that marks the infatuation portion of a relationship is not sustainable on its own. It's like placing a flame in a bottle. Eventually, the flame will burn all the oxygen in the bottle and be extinguished.

So, there has to be some "fueling of the fire." This is "love," the verb. When I act in loving ways, I fuel the fire and keep it burning. If I stop tending to the other's needs because I don't feel that infatuation, the relationship will slowly (or not so slowly) die away.

When we continue to believe that "love" (infatuation) is the heart of a relationship, when that feeling is gone, we believe we are no longer in love. That is not the case; we have just failed to fuel the fire.

Reality TV has proven that any two people, given the right circumstances and settings, can fall into love (chemistry of infatuation). But story after story shows that it is harder to make the switch to "true love" that comes from action. Choose action, and don't be fooled by chemistry.

By acting on love, by making love a verb and not an emotion, we keep the emotional fire stoked. And that is the great irony: if we depend on the feeling of being in love to keep us together, it will fail. But if we set that aside and focus on being more loving, the feeling of being in love is sustained. Mature love is a verb, not an emotion.

ARTICLE 4

Title: Will Valentine's Day Ruin Your Marriage?

Ah, February! Our minds start turning to thoughts of Valentine's Day. In the middle of winter, romance is suddenly in vogue. The stores are filled with cards, candy, jewelry, and any number of other products touting the opportunity to show your love how you feel.

Are we being set up? Have we bought into the idea of romance so much that we are literally destroying our relationships with expectations? I think we are. In fact, I think we have made a false idol of romance at the expense of true love. We have confused infatuation and erotic love with deep, abiding love that leads to successful marriages.

Let me be clear. I have nothing against romance and romantic gestures. But we have made this the lead, not the result of love. We want to be awash in loving feelings and attraction for our

partner. Then we expect those feelings to be the cement, the glue that keeps us together. Hogwash!

I just checked my email. In the last month, I have received 104 pleas for help from people hearing this statement from their spouse, "I love you, but I'm not in love with you." The translation is this: "I have a feeling of care for you, but I don't feel erotic emotions toward you." The problem is that this statement is a lie on the front end ("I love you") and a misunderstanding on the back end ("but I'm not in love with you").

The lie, I'll get to in a moment. The misunderstanding is this: being "in love" with someone is based on the nurturing of a relationship. It is not some emotion that is at the whims of Cupid shooting an arrow. Too often I hear, "I can't help how I feel." True, but people can choose how they act. And that is really the crux of the matter.

Love has been confused in our culture. The ancient Greeks were much clearer. They used three words to talk about love: Eros, Phileo, and Agape. Eros was about attraction (erotic love). Phileo was about friendship. And Agape was about commitment. Our society has segregated these three areas. Interestingly, we all want commitment and acceptance from our lover/spouse (Agape love), but too often want to feel attraction (Eros love) toward our spouse.

In other words, we want that attractive, successful, romantic, loving person to accept us, mistakes, shortcomings, failures, and all. We want what we have a hard time offering.

So what is the lie? Love is a commitment. It is an action verb, based on being loving and doing loving actions toward the other person. It is based on making a choice to love the other. Not for a moment, but for a lifetime.

Brain scans show that people who are "in love" (caught up in the infatuation) have very similar patterns to those who are mentally ill. So being "madly in love" is not just a figure of speech. It is a physical reality.

The problem is that this is unsustainable. The love of infatuation has to temper into a choice to being loving toward another person. I love someone because I choose to act lovingly, not because of the constancy of a feeling. That moves the whole possibility from being at the whims of Cupid to having a conscious choice over how I participate in a relationship.

Let me be clear here: I am not opposed to visits of Eros. In fact, I think this is a feeling that is important and necessary in a long-term marriage. But I believe the emotion emerges from acting in loving ways. In other words, when I make romance primary, I am lost when it is gone. When I make love a verb, and action I can choose, the romantic feelings will naturally emerge.

Valentine's Day is a threat to your relationship when you make the romantic feelings the goal. To paraphrase a commercial: card, \$3.50; candy, \$20.00; flowers, \$50.00. Acting lovingly toward your spouse: Priceless (and free!). When Valentine's Day rolls around, make it an opportunity to show your love, not a day to judge your erotic feelings.

If you are ready to leave the myths behind and discover the relationship of your dreams, go to <http://www.savethemarriage.com>

Other Helpful Resources

<http://www.savethemarriage.com/affiliate/affiliate.html>

<http://savethemarriage.com/>

<http://savethemarriage.com/stmblog/blog.html>

affiliate@savethemarriage.com

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