

SURVIVING AND THRIVING IN MARRIAGE MEDITATIONS

1. TURNING ME INTO WE

be aware-----be aware that though we may have grown up thinking that our world centers around 'ME', and whatever I do, see, think, feel and say, it's all about what's in it for me....but to survive in marriage, the ME has to turn into WE

see-----see WE in everything you do, feel, experience, think and say.....see what's in it for WE ...see what's bothering WE....see what WE can do to get the most out of it....practice opening up this psychic space of WE and the next 10 times that ME comes up, substitute WE ...and carry on like this until you make the shift

2. KING AND QUEEN

be aware-----be aware that when a spouse turns their partner into king and queen, raising up their honor and adoration and love at least as much as their own, if not more so, then the spouse will not only lovingly do the same to their partner, but they actually will bring out their true royal selves, and also free up each other to live their respective lives fully, rather than wasting all their live's energies to get that long lost respect and adoration from each other

see-----see how so very special your partner truly is....see how you take advantage of every opportunity to let them know it; sometimes in words, sometimes in deeds, sometimes in nonverbal communication.....see what you can do to bring out their very best sides, their very best talents, their very best traits.....see what you can do to make them feel that you are doing all in your power to make them feel royal

3. FOREVER

be aware-----be aware that marriage is forever, even beyond 'till death do us part'...forever...and once marriage becomes another 'if it's

not working, i let it go', or 'i deserve better than this, so I'm out of here' phenomenon, like so many other throwaway realms of today's society, then you might as well give it up before you start---or at least make sure you get a good prenuptial agreement-- 'just in case'.....but if you know it's forever no matter what--you're going to somehow learn how to MAKE IT WORK.....

see-----see your marriage as lasting forever.....see how those bumps in the road aren't really that bumpy once you know that you're going to be together forever, and you both figure out how to smooth out the bumps....see how the passage of time causes your marriage to mature like the finest of old wines....see how the more of life that you spend together with your 'one and only', the more your mutual love grows and grows

4. G-D IS YOUR OWN PERSONAL LIFELONG MATCHMAKER

be aware-----be aware that you and your beloved were brought together by THE ONE ABOVE--2 long lost partners reunited---2 that used to be one, learning to become one again....be aware that G-d doesn't stop matchmaking you after the wedding is over, but keeps at it all of your lives, every day and at all times, G-d is causing you to fuse and bond together in new and varied ways that you never even dreamed about

see-----see your spouse as your soul partner....see that life is full of opportunities of bonding in new and different ways...see that you are being constantly blessed [if you only open up your receptive powers to let G-d in] with G-d's guidance on how to bond in new and different and deeper ways with your spouse.....the guidance will come to you in 'flashes' of thought...in signs, in conversations that are addressed to you or addressed to someone else but meant for you...and in many other ways

5. GIVING CREATES LOVE

be aware-----be aware that despite the common notion that we need to first 'fall in love' in order to be motivated to give to our beloved, our Sages teach us exactly the opposite-----in order to truly love someone, we need to give to them [the word love AHAVA--comes from the root HAV which means give]the more that we care and give and keep giving with all of our

hearts, the more we love them

see-----see yourself thoroughly enjoying the act of giving to your beloved, not because you get something in return, just because it is so nice just to give and to see your beloved receiving what you give them....see yourself becoming more and more of an ecstatic, paradised and expert giver as time goes on---a giver who is causing so much love to be born into your marriage and your world---mutual profound love....see how your love grows stronger and stronger with every passing day....

****** we'll leave it at that this week my friends, and see what the ONE ABOVE sends our way for next time*

*lots of love and blessings
Yitzchak*

MARRIAGE MEDITATIONS [part 2]

CONNECTIONS

*****Last time I presented 5 different marriage meditations. When I looked back over them, and looked at the meditations that I want to present to you now, I noticed an emerging pattern. Those first meditations were about how you PERCEIVE the whole idea of marriage from a Jewish based perspective. The meditations I'm bringing now are more about how to practically connect with your spouse [thus our subtitle, CONNECTIONS].

MARRIAGE MEDITATIONS [part 2]

CONNECTIONS

1. ALONE TOGETHER

be aware-----be aware that we come into this world alone and we leave this world alone, and even though we may be married for most of our years, we still spend a huge chunk of our lives alone.....be aware that the Torah teaches us, that to the extent that we love ourselves, to that extent, we can love others, as it is written, 'Love Your Neighbor As You Love YOURSELF...'.....also be aware that certain personality traits, are very different to that of our spouse's....to the extent that we are able to be aware and realize our 'differentness', to that extent, we can be aware. appreciative and help realize our spouse's, and thereby truly live an authentic, blessed life alone and yet totally together

see-----see the years of your life going by with a greater and greater awareness of how you are unique and different than your spouse, yet you find that the more that you

are aware of your mutual differences, the more love and appreciation that you feel for your spouse, and the more amazed you feel in seeing how two very different beings can fit together so beautifully

2. STABILITY---

be aware-----be aware that is a time honoured custom to wish the bride and groom the following blessing; 'may you be priviledged to raise a "bayit neeman b'Yisrael" [a home that's faithful or trustworthy in Israel]....in order to create such a home, you would need a few essential ingredients [all with help from ABOVE, of course], the main one is probably stability-- like they say, 'through thick and thin'....to have a stable 'bayit neeman', you need to cultivate the traits of patience and flexibility, but maybe more important, you need to have the wisdom to create such a home atmosphere, as the verse says-- 'bchochma yivne bayit...' ['with wisdom you build a home...']

see-----see your future life pass by in a flash in front of your eyes, but only focus on the part that shows your spouse and yourself together in all kinds of situations. Notice how, that in each new experience, you see yourselves feeling more and more motivated and adept at keeping things stable between yourselves. Experience yourselves growing all the time in mutual patience and flexibillity. See how you develop through time, the wisdom to make things work out

as well as they can between you.....Now come back to the present moment, and with the knowledge that Hashem can make all of this come true for you, simply declare your intent to create a true 'Bayit Neeman' ['a Faithful Home']-----and rest assured that from now on Hashem will surprise and delight you in bringing all this into being!

3. WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU IS GOOD FOR ME

be aware-----be aware that perhaps the most powerful recipe for marital success is to become aware and to actualize the state of consciousness that guides us constantly to seek out how we can transform our spouse into the best possible person that they can be, and to know that to the extent that they evolve into this person, to that extent, we also evolve into the best person that we can be

see-----see yourself becoming more and more clear about the fact that what is good for your spouse, is good for you.....see yourself jumping into the role of chief 'cheer leader' for your spouse, cheering on every positive move in the direction of their self realization.....see how the more that they improve, you improve, and vice versa--the more that you improve, the more they improve

4. TOTAL BONDING

be aware-----be aware that one of the main lessons and challenges of marriage, is that two separate people are

destined to become as fully fused and bonded as is humanly possible [perhaps as a mystical reflection of the united soul that they originate from].....be aware that the bond that they ultimately can forge with each other, can be so profound, that their united force, can successfully stand up to all of the trials, tribulations and challenges the world has to offer, even if it means going in one direction with the world going in the opposite direction [as did our forefather Abraham the 'Ivri' --the one from the other side]

see-----see yourself being guided from ABOVE at all times, towards deeper and deeper bondings with your spouse....see how everything that you encounter that relates to the two of you somehow, proves itself to be a fantastic opportunity to deepen your mutual understanding and bonding.....see, how with the passage of time, you and your spouse take on a single, powerful, united personality, that is capable of successfully standing up to all challenges, no matter how difficult

5.COPING WITH DIFFICULTY

be aware-----be aware that perhaps the most important and most challenging part of marriage----i.e....the part which is necessary for achieving all the previous transcendent levels that we have mentioned, is your ability to cope with the difficulty of marriage.....Unless you happen to be a couple of pure angelic beings, you're going to probably fight, misunderstand each other, hurt each other, drive each other a

bit crazy....etc...etc...it comes with the turf.....the turf of 2 very different people trying their best to become as intimately connected as possible.....be aware that it's ultimately all for your best.....the pain you go through can forge you into becoming the mature human being and loving spouse that you're destined to be. But you must, have a large dose of patience, perseverance and Emuna [faith], as well as a steel will to seek peace between yourselves..... and a bit of knowhow to facilitate this treasured peace!!

see-----see as time goes by, that every time that you have some type of misunderstanding or argument with your spouse, you find yourself becoming softer and softer towards them.....see yourself seeking out more and more a way of seeing things from their point of view---non-judgmentally, with greater and greater compassion and benevolence.....see how the quantity as well as the intensity of your arguments, are steadily diminishing, until there is nothing left, but peace between you!

Here's wishing you a peaceful home.

Yitzchak

MARRIAGE MEDITATIONS [part 3]

I asked myself at the beginning of this week, which meditations should I add to the already growing list of meditations [that we are in the process of converting into a booklet]. A few different ideas crossed my mind----such as 'Sefirotic Alignment Therapy' meditations, Microcosmic Consciousness meditations and The Essence of Jewishness meditations--just to name a few.

One of the methods that I use to arrive at choices and decisions such as these, is to resonate with what my soul and Divine providence seem to be pointing me towards at this particular time and place.

Right now, we are in the midst of a weeklong celebration of our daughter's post wedding 'Sheva Brachot' [referring to the 7 Blessings that we celebrants bless the young couple with on each of the 7 days after the wedding].

Amongst all kinds of creative ideas that people of the community come up with to send off the couple in a joyous spirit [in contrast to the 'honeymoon' idea, where the couple begin their marriage by leaving their community to be alone] , an effort is made by friends and family to guide the couple with Divine-based and original teachings and principles that will enlighten the journey that they are about to undertake with each other.

So it became clear to me that marriage meditations are supposed to be the meditations that I am to send out to you this week [besides an additional providential hint in that I have been receiving recently an upsurge in the amount of requests coming my way to do marriage guidance]...

So in addition to the 2 other weeks of marriage meditations that we brought about 2 months ago, here are some more----Believe me, from experience I can tell you ---we can never get enough insight and guidance in this crucial area-----

MARRIAGE MEDITATIONS [part 3]

1. A HOLY UNION

BE AWARE-----Be aware that just as is true with all else in Jewish living, marriage is an expression of holiness. One of the main terms for marriage is 'Kiddushin' or Sanctification.....be aware that to the extent that you infuse your marriage with holiness, to that extent, your home---which includes your spouse, your children and your very lives, will radiate G-dliness and holiness.....be aware that the Shechina--G-d's felt Presence---is the source of all well being.....be aware that marriage affords you perhaps the greatest opportunity for drawing the Shechina into your lives in an large variety of ways-----through the Holy, G-dly way that you relate to your spouse with all of the Mitzvot involved, and through Torah learning, prayer and other Mitzvot that your marriage enables you to access----as well as an endless array of mundane activities in the marriage and home environment, which all become sanctified when you intend them for the sake of Heaven....

SEE-----See your marriage as being a ripe field of opportunity for drawing into your lives the Shechina.....see that the more that you connect to the Shechina, the more that your life is filled with wellbeing.....see yourself grabbing every possible opportunity to connect to holiness within the context of your marriage----in the holy way that you relate to your wife----in the holy actions, Mitzvot, prayers and Torah-learning that you carry out in your married home.....See that your marriage is becoming your main impetus for bringing more and more holiness into your lives at every opportunity!!

2. QUALITY COMMUNICATION

BE AWARE-----Be aware that the main means of marital bonding is through speaking and communicating with each other as often as possible and in the most quality way possible.....Be aware that quality communication with your spouse, is an art-form to be cultivated with a lot of wisdom and dedication-----usually it doesn't come naturally to either spouse, since they represent different genders with very different ways of communicating----the female way is usually more free-flowing, emotional and non linear with a built-in understanding that conversation is an end in

and of itself----whereas the male style is usually more curt, dry and linear and conversation is understood to be a means to an end.....be aware that the key is for the opposite gender to know how to communicate not only in the opposite fashion [than its own]----but to go beyond just gender differences , and learn how to communicate in a way that suits the unique needs and personality and moods and orientation of their spouse.....King Solomon teaches us, 'With wisdom, we build (our) home...' ,and this especially applies to the wisdom that we need to know in order to speak in a quality way to our spouses....

SEE-----See that you are constantly developing the art and the finesse of communicating to your spouse in a quality way....see that you are learning to communicate in a way that is very different from your own and what you are used to.....see that you are communicating in a way that suits the needs, timing and personality of your spouse.....see that as time goes by, your communication with your spouse becomes the highlight of your day---your shelter from the storm---your sanctuary that you constantly look forward to in life----your source of reenergizing and renewing yourself and your spouse and your mutual love.....

3. MARITAL HARMONY

BE AWARE-----Be aware that there are many different levels of Shalom Bayit [literally 'Peace in the Home'--conceptually---Marital Harmony]---- the most simple and fundamental level is to make sure that the couple is at peace with each other as much as possible-----There are deeper levels of Shalom Bayit [the word Shalom comes from the root Shalem---meaning perfect or complete]-- where each spouse becomes the greatest enabler or empowered of the other one--- -They look at each other's wellbeing and rectification and mission in life , as being their main aspiration in life.....She is his supreme object of adoration and respect....He is her King.....Be aware that an even deeper level is when the 2 of them become one unit----and just as our Forefather Abraham opposed the entire world's outlook [he is referred to as the 'Ivri' (the Hebrew) ---the one from the other side from the rest of humanity]--and came out victorious, so too is it with a couple who are actually 1 unit---who are masters of Shalom Bayit----they can accomplish anything and everything even though they may be at odds with everyone!!

SEE-----See how the peace and harmony between you and your spouse becomes the exclusive environment in your home.....see how the level of harmony between you two, grows more and more also in quality as time goes by.....see how you naturally seek out the wellbeing of your partner and how they seek out yours....see how you look for whatever you can do to help them rectify themselves of any blemish or other type of suffering that they need to deal with.....se that they become the best that they can become and accomplish what they have come to this earth to accomplish.....see how the two of you become so synchronized with each other at all levels that you actually become one unit.....see that this one unit is able to deal with anything and everything that life and people challenge you with....see that you become shining examples of marital harmony for other couples to emulate....

peace and love
Yitzchak