



MARRIAGE EDUCATION AND RESOURCE CENTER

## March, 2024 The Marriage Education and Resource Center (MERCY)



February 7, 2024 marked 54 years of marriage for us. Our relationship today is unrecognizable from the early years of our marriage.

Here are a few things we've learned over the years about marriage and continue to practice:

- We had to build our marriage on a commitment to Jesus and a foundation of God's word (the Bible). Until we did this, our marriage was a mess.
- Prayer has, and is, the cornerstone of our lives.
- We had to work at our marriage. It takes effort, attention and intentionality. A great marriage isn't something you find. It is something you make. In addition, we've strengthened our marriage by:
- Being in a monthly small group for over 35 years with other Christian couples who want to

### Upcoming Marriage Events

#### Abundant Marriage

March 8  
MERCY Barn  
8510 Highway 111  
Memphis, IN

FREE



This workshop will focus on God wanting us to have His abundance "in all things at all times." 2 Cor. 9:8  
Yes, this applies to our marriages, too!

So how do we find this "abundance?" Well, for one, we can begin by learning to understand "the fruit of the Spirit" we read about in Galatians 5:22 - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

You'll have fun, laugh a little and learn a few great

- enhance their marriage.
- We've read loads of books, listened to podcasts, attended numerous marriage events and offered them through MERCY.
  - Mentored others.
  - We had to learn good communication and conflict-resolution skills.
  - We've had to learn to forgive and give grace.
  - We have both strived to be other-centered.
  - We try to practice the other's love language.
  - We had to learn we can't change the other. We can only change ourselves and we need the Holy Spirit to do this.
  - We check in with one another about schedules daily/weekly.
  - We've had fun.
  - Touched often.
  - Taken responsibility for our actions.
  - Get help when needed.

These are just a few of the things that have kept us going all these years. It's been a long road. It has not been easy. We're still a work in progress.

Grace and peace,  
Penny and David

### A Moment That Changed Their Lives -

Bob and Carol Esham, with MERCI Indiana, were interviewed by the 700 Club on February 19, 2024.

We are so proud of the marriage ministry they have built with God as their anchor.

We would love for you to listen to their testimony.

marriage tips along the way to have the abundant marriages God intended for us!

To register, [click here](#).



Nashville, TN - March 22-24, 2024

A counselor-led workshop for couples in crisis.

A New Beginning is a turn-around weekend designed to help couples who feel stuck in an unhealthy marriage, couples who are frustrated and unhappy and couples considering divorce.

For more information, [click here](#).

### [PRIORITIES, Marriage & Family God's Way](#)

April 5, 2024 | 6:30 PM to 8:15 PM

MERCI

8510 Indiana 111

Memphis, IN 47143

FREE



If you yearn for a less hectic home



life with your spouse and children, you'll not want to miss this free workshop!

Learn how to prioritize your marriage amid life's busyness and honor God's plan for your marriage and family.

To register, [click here](#)

### Don't Buy the Soulmate Myth - by Brad Wilcox

*The Wall Street Journal/*  
"Men and women who buy into the soulmate model appear more likely to end up divorced."

### What Husbands and Wives Need - Excerpts from Shaunti Feldhahn



Shaunti Feldhahn, social researcher, best-selling author and popular speaker today applies her analytical skills to investigating eye-opening, life-changing truths about relationships, both at home and in the workplace.

Following is the highlights of a multi-part-series on what our spouses need, but may not always articulate. This month, we want to point out a few emotional needs of men, and a few needs of women. Next month we will

### [Close Encounters of the Best Kind](#) April 10, 17 & 24, 2024

MERCI Barn  
8510 Highway 111  
Memphis, IN



3 Consecutive Wednesday "date" nights of fun, games, intentional together time - teaching and guidance to achieve your marriage goals, sharing a meal or dessert and, most importantly, time for the two of you, as a couple, to dream and commit to an even better marriage this year!!

Limited to 7 couples  
\$25/couple covers all 3 date nights  
April 10 - Charcuterie Board  
April 17 - Ice cream Sundaes  
April 24 - Chick fil A Nuggets, Queso & Chips

share additional ones.

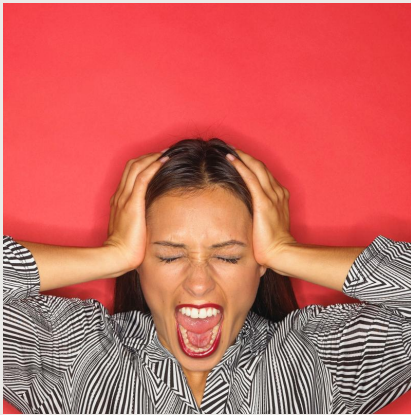
#### Needs of Men - Part 1

- Companionship
- To know that they "did good."
- Two Words - Thank you!

#### Needs of Women - Part 1

- For you to listen to her.
- To be helped without having to ask
- Physical affection outside the bedroom

Of course, Feldhahn goes into detail about each of these needs of men and women. To read her entire articles on these topics, [click here](#)



#### Tips to Help you Stop Overthinking

2 Corinthians 10:5 says, *"We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."*

This means we need to guard our thoughts and examine them to make sure they align with Scripture.

Here are some tips to help

\*This program will be facilitated by Tim & Brandy Gibson, MERCI Mentors & Program Leaders

To register, [click here](#)



#### Husband and Wife Journey - May 3-5

Country Lake Christian Retreat in Underwood, IN

These weekend journeys provide the perfect opportunity for Growing Your Marriage. With the busyness of life and unexpected challenges, couples often lose sight of what first brought them together.

Conflict and coexistence were not God's design for marriage; it can be so much more. We invite you to embark on a journey with your loved one, blending biblical teachings with rest and recreation.

Your fun-filled weekend begins Friday evening and wraps up by noon on Sunday. Your registration fee includes housing, program materials, meals-snacks, recreational activities and more.

May Journey Registration Fee (per couple) –  
Early Registration – \$425  
After March 1, 2024 – \$450

you do just that:

- Retrain your brain - Do you need to transform your mind? The next time you start to overthink, immediately stop and take those thoughts to Christ. What does the Lord say about these thoughts?
- Keep a journal
- Challenge your negative thoughts.
- Try to determine your triggers.
- Let go of things you cannot control.
- Take a break - walk around, stretch your body, etc.
- Pause, breathe and practice self-awareness.
- If this overthinking continues, seek help.

To register and for more information, [click here](#)

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According to the Institute of Family Studies, [1-in-3: A Record Share of Young Adults Will Never Marry](#)

- There is an historic low for 35-year-old and 45-year-old men and women.
  - One-third of men and women who turn 45 in 2050 (those who are around 18 or 19 today) will not have married.
  - Only about 60% of 35-year-old men are ever-married today, down from 90% in 1980.
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## **MERCY'S Status Report for 2023**

Each year we like to share with you some of the activities the Lord has allowed MERCY to achieve.

- MERCY offered a fun Pizza Date Night with the "Growing Your Marriage" team. Seventy-five people attended.
- MERCY was able to give a scholarship to "The Weekend to Remember" three-day event.
- David and I were on a podcast with Denise Watts-Wilson's "Mining the Gold."
- We personally mentored six couples in 2023.
- We continued to meet with our monthly Couplettime group.
- MERCY continued to issue our monthly electronic newsletter to approximately 470 people with an open rate of 54%.
- We had our annual fund-raising event through "Give for Good Louisville."
- We are continuing to meet quarterly with other ladies who have a heart for marriage ministry to share, pray, encourage and collaborate with one another and our ministries.

Some current needs at MERCY are:

- We would love to have someone who would be willing to write grants pro-bono or for a reasonable rate.
- We would also like to have a volunteer who would be willing to help with social media support/marketing.

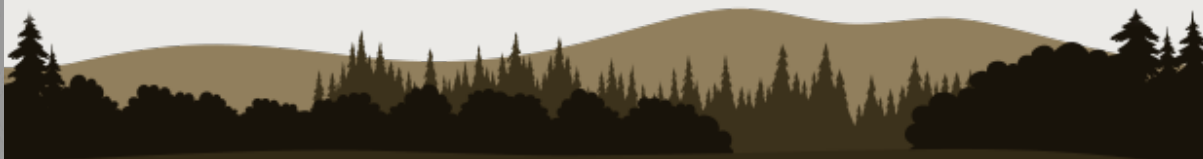
- Continued financial support.
- We would really like if more people would share MERCY'S electronic newsletters. The more we can reach, the more we can help.
- More prayer warriors
- More sign-ups to Kroger's Rewards program.

Please know we are so grateful for each of you who support MERCY in so many ways; i.e., through prayer, financially, mentoring, sharing with others, attending marriage events of which we are aware.  
God Bless You!


## Couplettime

Please review the Needs of Men and Women above and discuss with your spouse, how important each of those are to you.

Also, while we do not have all the answers when it comes to marriage, we hope some of the ideas we shared may be helpful to you. Discuss with one another if there are any you would like to adopt.



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