

Five Steps to Building Unity in a Marriage



Steps

About the 5 Steps Series

The books in the 5 Steps Series are useful for anyone seeking bridge-building solutions to current issues. The 5 Steps series presents positive approaches for engaging with the problems that open up gaps and divisions in family, school, church, and society. Each volume presents five short chapters (or “steps”) on a single topic. Each chapter includes a relevant “excerpt”, “insights” from the author(s), and an “example” to consider. The “example” is a real-life story that illustrates how each step can be applied in daily life.

Topics include:

- Facing Suffering
- Living Christian Unity
- Effective Student Leadership
- Positive Political Dialogue
- Great Parenting

Five Steps to Building Unity in a Marriage

Insights and Examples

Kevin and Katie Kelley



New City Press
of the Focolare
Hyde Park, New York

Published in the United States by New City Press
202 Comforter Blvd., Hyde Park, NY 12538
www.newcitypress.com
©2015 Kevin and Katie Kelley

Cover design by Leandro de Leon and Nick Cianfarani

Real-Life Stories unless otherwise noted are printed with permission
from various issues of *Living City Magazine*, Hyde Park, NY.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2015949868

978-1-56548-512-9 (paperback)

978-1-56548-668-3 (e-book)

2nd Printing: May 2018

Printed in the United States of America

Contents

Introduction.....	1
-------------------	---

Step 1

Remember the Love.....	3
<i>Challenges Big and Small.....</i>	10

Step 2

Communicate with Love.....	15
<i>Barbecue in the Park.....</i>	19

Step 3

Share our Experiences of God's Love.....	25
<i>Faith, Hope and Love.....</i>	29

Step 4

Share the Mercy of Love	33
<i>The End and Beginning of a Marriage</i>	37

Step 5

Share the Life of Love with Others around You	43
<i>Our Extended Family</i>	46
Notes	49
Acknowledgement	50
About the Authors	51

Introduction

*M*ARRIED COUPLES' LIVES ARE often filled with hustle and bustle, schedules and chores, activities and demands, the nitty-gritty of life. Because of this, a harmonious life based on loving one another may seem hard to come by. We hope that this booklet will offer you help, encouragement, and empowerment so that no matter what your situation or experience has been or is now, you come to believe in the transforming power of love. The apparently simple ideas in these Five Steps have transformed our own life as a couple and as a family. This is what moves us to share them with you.

Throughout the five chapters, we frequently refer to something that has been vital in our own journey as a married couple, the so-called "Art of Loving," a set of concepts based on the gospel which, we believe, can be applied in daily life by people of any background or conviction.

We should emphasize that this book is not intended to provide a prescription or a checklist for a “perfect marriage.” There is no such thing. Nor is it intended to be a source of counseling for couples in serious crisis. While we do believe the power of love is unlimited, certain situations may demand professional help and intervention that this book cannot provide.

We do hope that what follows might encourage couples in their life journey together and their desire to grow more and more in love with each other and with the source of all love, God. Achieving a marriage full of love and beauty, something that all of us long for, begins with our first experience, the experience that God loves each of us with a personal and immense love. From there, everything else is possible.

Steps

Step 1

Remember the Love

The Seasons of Love

Human love has its seasons. It begins when the couple falls in love. It is like a spark of the love of God that ignites the life of a family.... Then comes the fruit-bearing season, a time of growth and consolidation. Situations change, people themselves over time change and evolve. Love experiences other moments, other flavors, and other expressions and so our capacity to love must continuously be renewed. Precisely is this dynamic, which makes them into a one that cannot be dissolved, is contained the couple's entire future.

Chiara Lubich¹