

Hello everyone and welcome to The Marriage Melody where we are composing a lifetime of love and happiness. I am your host, Rivkah Harper.

So, you met this amazing man and you fell in love with each other. At some point you found yourself engaged and now you're married. Congratulations! You were both madly in love with each other and probably had dreams of your new life together. You were both so very happy and you thought it could not get any better.

And then reality set in. Perhaps you are still happily married. Yay! That is not an easy task to accomplish. Or perhaps marriage is not as rosy as it appeared at first. And why does it seem like this is the norm? Maybe things are not working out as you would have hoped. Or maybe things aren't that bad but are not that great either.

What if I told you that no matter where you find yourself in your marriage you can make it better. Yes, if you're lucky to be happily married you can be happier. And even if things aren't going as well at all you can turn your marriage around.

So, I am not a therapist or a doctor. I am just someone who is passionate about her marriage and passionate about helping other ladies amass tools for themselves to put into their marriage toolbox so they can maneuver this thing called marriage and learn to make their own marriage amazing.

My goal is that together we will explore marriage. What is it? Why do we have it? What is the meaning of marriage? Why can marriage be so difficult? Why do relationships start out wonderful but after a while they seem to fall apart? And one can wonder if maybe they made a mistake and God forbid married the wrong person. We will learn how to look at marriage and learn tools you can have a happy successful and most amazing marriage. If one is sincere and truly wants to have a better marriage the tools that we are going to learn will help. Most people really truly want to have a happy marriage. They just don't know how to make that happen. After all, how many of us had marriage 101 in school? We make this huge life decision, and it really is a life changer and we don't get a class on it? A person is lucky if they grew up with both parents in their home let alone parents that really truly got along with each other. Such a life commitment and no preparation. No wonder there are so many issues in our marriages.

However, before we begin, I have to start off by making a disclaimer. The tools I teach will help most marriages. Even if you and your husband seem to be trapped in a continual loop of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony movement number one and every interaction seems to be a yelling match. If used sincerely and correctly these tools can help. The relationships that will not help are the ones that are abusive. If you or someone you know is in an abusive relationship please please, please go get help. There's a lot of places you can go to that will help you. You can go to the National Domestic Violence Hotline and you can go to their website at thehotline.org and they're there for you 24-7.

Okay now that that is out of the way here's a little bit more about me. I am happily married to my partner in crime for almost 26 years. Yes, we have had our shares of ups and downs but through it all we have been by each other's side. We have four beautiful boys all of whom I have homeschooled until grade nine. My husband and I had many adventures together including various business ventures. Though through many years my passion has been marriage both my own as well as helping others.

I do have a weeklies lady class in my home where I learn with some of the most amazing women and after each class, I give them homework and I send them back home so they can practice and master all the tools. And I want to share with you all the tools and secrets that we learn. I feel they can help so many women and I am so excited about having the opportunity to share what I know with you. Marriage is so special, and you should have happiness and contentment in your marriage and with that you will, God willing, have happiness and contentment in your life as well.

Now as little girls we were fed stories, fantasies that had us all dreaming. There was something called the "Perfect Marriage" and you know the story. It goes like this. Once upon a time, long, long ago, in a land far far away, yes you know it, you know what's coming next, there once was this beautiful maiden stuck in a tall tower. One day a knight in shining armor came riding by on a majestic white horse and stopped at the bottom of the tower. Okay you know what's going on, let's continue. He saw the lovely maiden and fell instantly in love and wanted to marry her. Unfortunately to reach her, the knight had to cross a moat that had the fiercest dragon in the country. After a long hard battle, the knight finally won and killed the dragon, permitting him to reach the love of his life. They got married and lived happily ever after. Sounds like a dream come true. The perfect marriage.

We all would like a marriage with absolute bliss. Our husbands being our knight in shining armor, never getting into fights, or having arguments, where things run ever so smoothly. Oh, and don't forget, our husbands can always read our minds and know when we are sad and know exactly what will cheer us up, without us having to say a word.

However, the truth is, we will never reach that perfect level and I hate to break it to you, our husbands cannot read our minds and won't always surprise us with the exact thing that we need and want, without us having to say a word.

So, you ask, why not? Why can't we have this perfect marriage? Well, for one simple reason, we are not perfect. And you know what? We're not supposed to be. Only God is perfect. Anything else is, by default, not perfect. So this so-called perfect marriage is a goal. It is something to aspire to, like learning to play a musical instrument. There's always something else to learn, something else to play. No matter how good or gifted you are, there's always more you can do. And just like with everything else, the greater the effort you put into it, the greater the reward.

That means that no matter how happy you are right now in your marriage, you can always be happier. I remember after being married for five years, I looked back and thought, wow! I could not have imagined how happy I was. Several years later, I looked back again and thought, wow! I felt like I was happier in my marriage than I was after five years. And I thought that after five years, I had a wonderful marriage. And I did. I just could not fathom that there could be something even better. This is how marriage should be. And it doesn't matter where you're starting from. If you feel like you have a good marriage already, or if you know things are a bit or a lot rocky, it can continuously get better and better. And what's wrong with this perfect marriage? Why can't marriage work like the maiden and knight story that was fed to us when we were little? For the simple reason that if it did, we would not be able to appreciate it. It would not mean much to us at all. We would not be happy. Our happiness is about how much effort I put in.

If I would take a grade one math test and receive a hundred percent, I would say, good, but so what? I didn't have to study or think to answer the question three plus five equals eight. However, if I were given a grade 12 or college math test on algebra or calculus, I would have to study and go over the material before taking the test. And then even if I did not get all the questions correct, I would most likely be quite satisfied with myself with how well I did, especially since it's been many, many years since I've done calculus. The more I study corresponds to the degree of satisfaction that I receive afterwards.

This is how we were created. This is part of our DNA. We were created with the need to put in our effort in order to appreciate the happiness afterwards. This is why we don't have that perfect marriage. And if you think about it, we also don't want it. For if we were able to attain that level, there would be nothing else in our marriage to strive for. There would be nothing more for us to do and we would no longer be as happy.

But we do want it as a goal. It is a goal so high up that it is unattainable. However, it gives us direction. We want to be happy and we want to be able to work as one with our husbands and we want to eliminate the strife. We want to keep striving for it. We want to keep focused. For as long as we keep striving, we do become closer and closer to the persons most dear to us and our happiness and contentment keeps growing.

So, am I saying that fights, arguments, and disagreements are part of a marriage? Yes. Two people get married for they love each other, and they would like to spend the rest of their lives together. But then at some point in the marriage, usually something happens. And for some people they might even begin to think that they married the wrong person, God forbid. But you did not. We will learn that God only lets two people get married who are meant for each other.

Okay, so here I am going to pause and give you the spoiler alert. I am going to give you the secret to having the most wonderful, successful, amazing marriage. Get this - in one sentence. Are you ready? Here it is. When a woman treats her husband like a king, her husband will treat her like a queen. There you go. Now you have everything about marriage there is to know and you don't have to learn anything else. Understanding what this means and implementing the lessons are what you are going to work on every day for the rest of your lives.

Wait, did I say every day? Yes, every day. Marriage is not something that's on a bucket list. It's not something that I can accomplish and then tick off my list and go on. This is where most people get stuck. With a bucket list, I can check off that I read a certain book, or I traveled to a certain place and then I can move on to the next thing. Marriage is not like that. Marriage is like learning a trade or playing an instrument. I'm either growing and going upwards or I'm going downwards. There is no place where I'm staying the same. I might go up or go down slowly but it's still up or down. Marriage is the same. You either are growing together in your marriage or you're growing apart.

Marriage is the most or one of the most challenging relationships we will have. So, what makes it so challenging? We know that each person created is different from any other person in the world and each one of us has a different role to play. How do we know this? Well, easy. We can just look at people physically and take a look at us and we all look different. Even identical twins aren't a hundred percent identical. So, we might look similar to someone, but we are all different. We all have different fingerprints. We all have different retina eye prints and as people we are each unique people with our

own unique thoughts, ideas, and experiences. And aside from each one of us being different, men and women are very different.

I know. Society doesn't want to tell us that. It wants to say that we are all the same but we're not. We are different. We have different ways of thinking and seeing things and different ways of responding to situations. There is no way that's better than another. They're both good but they are different.

We will hopefully not only learn about our differences, but we'll learn to appreciate ourselves as women and our husbands as men. And just like a good song where the melody and harmony are perfectly in line with each other, our goal is to make a marriage melody the same. We want to create this amazing marriage melody with our husbands so that it is so in tune that we are like one.

Now the homework. I like to give homework because I find it's the only way to really practice and grow and internalize everything that we learn. So, you remember the secret sentence I gave you? When a woman treats her husband like a king, her husband will treat her like a queen. Your homework is what does this secret mean? If you can figure it out, you're well on your way to a more wonderful, melodious marriage. See you next week.