

Marriage Milestones

REDUNDANCY



Some see it coming, some do not. Perhaps to some it brings welcome relief, but to most it is shattering to be made redundant.

To many it is a time of confusion and muddled thinking, leading to despair and a feeling of hopelessness. For a few, to whom life can summon no further interest, the desire to continue is let go – with tragic results.

But marriage can be an advantage – sympathy, affirmation and help from a loving spouse can make a vast difference for the partner who feels lost and worthless.

Whether or not the vows 'for better, for worse; for richer, for poorer' were used at your marriage, God gave you to each other to be lifelong companions through the bad times as well as the good.

ONE COUPLE

Here are some ways one couple found their marriage helped when one of them was made redundant.

At the beginning

- **They had someone to whom to talk when they wanted to talk.** A man will often go silent at first and only wish to talk later. A woman will probably want to pour it out to her husband straightaway, not looking for answers but for listening and for comfort. Either can gain much reassurance from the other about their work, their gifts and their specialness.
- **It is important to make a speedy assessment of the new financial situation together.** It may not be as bad as it seems. Cutting back gradually may be possible; that is easier than doing it all at once. Inexpensive pleasures can be very enjoyable.
- **This couple took the first two weeks as a holiday** – to get over the pain without the pressure of job-seeking, and to allow time for reflection about a possible change of direction.

DOING THINGS

- **Tasks in and outside of the home which were not shared before can be shared or even swapped.** Things that have been waiting for ages to be done can now be tackled at last. It is important to be active and to achieve results, in order to help build a sense of worth.
- **A couple need to ensure that they give time to each other,** not just being in the same room while one fills in application forms and the other does the finances, but actually being together – sitting, walking or whatever and having fun together.
- **The husband or wife should find out how much help the redundant spouse wants with looking for a job.** Sometimes it may be helpful to check through a newspaper to see if there is anything the other has missed, but at other times to do so would only irritate.

SEEING FRIENDS

- **Anyone who has been made redundant is liable to slip into black periods,** especially when job applications seem to be getting nowhere. At such time it may help the couple to visit encouraging friends. The other partner should persist in helping the one out of work to remain optimistic, and to know they are valued.

MAKE OR BREAK?

- **Redundancy can break a marriage,** but it also provides an opportunity to grow together in mutual support and in a deeper companionship. Nothing can be more helpful than that – gentle and loving suggestions from an understanding spouse can help to disperse the depression, which often is present in such a situation. If redundancy has happened to you, may that deeper companionship be yours.

FINALLY

Most of us will have the car serviced regularly (if only for the MOT). What about marriage? Just as a car that is neglected is more likely to breakdown on the road, so is a neglected marriage more likely to end in divorce. How about giving your marriage a service?

To meet this need various marriage enhancement courses have been produced. **See the page "Marriage Enhancement" on the Marriage Resource website www.marriageresource.org.uk** . These courses are usually either provided by organisations on a residential weekend or a midweek break, or on a series of weeknights usually by a local church, both for their members and for non-members. If a charge is made, it may be reduced or waived in the light of a redundancy. These courses are designed to make any marriage better, whether or not there are problems. Do give your marriage a service – the benefits last for years!