



How to Make a Marriage Last

by Ken Johnston

What is Love?

“Make a Marriage Last”

<http://www.Relationship-Insurance.com>

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(Nobody likes to read this kind of stuff. We wish we didn't have to do it.)

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Introduction to: What is Love?

Every experience of your loved one creates a memory. Love becomes a bundle of feelings, created by the collection of memories of your loved one.

Marriages *fail* because people don't know what their bundle of love is and how to protect it. Marriages become *happy* when couples understand what love is and how to add to their bundle.

Is physical attraction love?

Love at first sight is simply attraction. Attraction can make your knees weak. It can make you speechless. It can hit you over the head like a baseball bat. It can be magical. But, you don't really need it to make a marriage last.

How about infatuation. Is that love?

Common definitions, such as "puppy love," or "having a crush," don't help us, because they don't recognize the power of infatuation to make you crazy.

A better definition is: temporary insanity that makes a person deaf, blind, and dumb. It's a form of madness, even though it feels wonderful and is an amazing feeling. You see no faults. It feels like love, but it isn't.

Infatuation turbo-charges your experiences with your lover so that an ordinary moment becomes an extraordinary memory.

Sadly, infatuation always goes away, and all of a sudden your loved one is simply a normal human being. To have a happy marriage, you need to know the real truth about infatuation.

Isn't there romantic love?

Ah, Romance. Moonlight and roses. Dancing in the dark. The thrill of the kiss. "Our song." Holding hands at midnight. An old fashioned love song. Romance isn't love, but it creates those magical memories of shared experience that become part of your collection of memories that is true love.

Guys will dance with you, bring flowers, call you just because they're thinking of you, and do tons more romantic things while you're dating. After the honeymoon, those things tend to fade away. That's normal. That's the way most marriages are.

Few marriages have much romance left after the honeymoon. If you want to make the marriage last, you can agree to carry some of the romance into and throughout your marriage. Read the following article: "What is Love?"

What Love Is

Once you know what love is, you'll know how to *keep it growing*, instead of letting it slip away. That's how to make a marriage last.

Love is a Collection of Memories

Every experience you have of your loved one creates a memory. Hopefully most of them are positive memories. Every memory comes attached to the *feeling* you felt when you had that experience. That what love is.

I use the term 'collection' when I'm talking about memories, because each memory is a discreet item you can recall one at a time.

Each memory comes with a feeling, some with good feelings, some not so good. The sum total of all the good and bad feelings connected to your partner becomes your "bundle" of love.

I call the bundle of feelings a 'bundle' because the feelings get all mixed up together and become one big bundle of feelings, even though the memories can be recalled one at a time. The feelings are not as discreet as the memories. That is, they become all mixed together. One big bundle — that's what love is.

The collection of memories produces your bundle of love

I apologize for these unromantic words, 'collection,' and 'bundle.' I wish there were better words to use to tell you what love is.

It's important to understand that the love you feel for your partner is a giant glob of feelings, some good and some not so good. All of the feelings were created by the experiences *of*, *about*, and *with* your partner.

If Harold imagines how wonderful it would be to hold Agnes tight and kiss her, he is creating an experience *of* Agnes. It will create a memory, and it produces a positive loving feeling. It adds to his bundle.

If Agnes talks about Harold to her best friend and tells her how wonderful he is, she is having an experience *about* Harold. She is creating a memory that produces a positive feeling. It adds to her bundle.

When Harold and Agnes kiss in a romantic place, it creates memories of a positive experience *with* each other. The memory creates a positive feeling. They are both adding to their bundles.

Their marriage will last if they protect their bundles

Harold and Agnes *get* married because they each have a bundle of loving feelings. By knowing that each experience together in the future will produce a memory — and add a good feeling or a bad feeling to their bundle — they can understand the secret to making a marriage last.

Harold and Agnes will *stay* married if their bundles grow over time. They need to find ways to add positive shared experiences, so their bundle will grow.

Harold and Agnes also need to know how to preserve their bundle from eroding. They need to know what to do when they have a fight. They need to learn to cope with the bad feelings a fight produces.

They need to know how to have fewer fights than other couples have. They need to know how to begin and end each 'issue' discussion on a positive and respectful note. They can even turn what might be a fight for another couple into a positive shared experience that will add to the love in their bundles.

What's the proof that love is a collection of memories?

You only need to visit a nursing home to see examples of people who have lost access to their memories. Alzheimer's, dementia, and other things that cause memory loss show us that when a woman cannot recognize a man as her husband, she feels no love for him. Her bundle of love has disappeared because she has no memory of her husband, good or bad. Mothers or Fathers can't recognize and remember their children.

You can only feel love if you can recall the memories of, about, and with the person, pet, or place.

In Summary, here's what love is

Love is a bundle of feelings attached to a collection of memories of experiences of, about, and with your partner.

Attraction, infatuation, and romance all play a role in super-charging the experiences, so the memories and feelings are so much stronger, but they are not love.

Physical Attraction

Physical attraction can be so powerful it takes your breath away. It can make your knees weak. You may not be able to speak, or even think. Learn what's magical about it, and how it can hurt you.

"Love at first sight" isn't really love. It's attraction. It's important to know the difference between attraction and love. People who don't understand the difference can find themselves running off to elope with a stranger — because of attraction — not love.

Attraction is a physical response — you feel it!

You look at someone, or hear his or her voice, and the physical attraction is immediate. In one case it can be mild. In another, it can be strong, and in yet another it can be intense.

Somehow (and nobody knows quite how), we're each "imprinted" at an early age — possibly as young as three or as old as eight or nine — with the imprint that will determine the person you will find attractive later in life.

You seem to have a mental picture of the person who is just "right" for you. Not only is there a picture, but also there is an imprint for the "right" voice: the sound, the tone, and the pace. You're imprinted not only with picture and sound, but odor, taste, and feel.

You're always on the lookout for people who match your attraction imprinting.

Before and even after you're married:

You — without even realizing it — automatically scan each person (of the right sex for you), and you feel physical attraction when you see, hear, or meet (or smell, touch, or taste) someone who matches some of the features for which you are imprinted. The closer that person comes to matching your imprint, the more intense the feeling. A complete match is not necessary for attraction. Just one or two key variables may be enough to give you the feeling of being attracted.

Good and bad news about attraction

Attraction is probably a genetic "leftover" from the time before humans learned to speak. Its purpose was to start the process of getting two pre-verbal cave dwellers to become a couple and raise children.

Because the whole attraction process is buried deeply into our brains, it's pretty automatic, so we don't have much control over it. It happens whether we like it or not.

That means that you might be happily married, in love with your partner, and BOING!, the bells go off when you meet someone who closely matches your imprinting.

The good news is that attraction is a wonderful, delightful, and exciting experience.

The bad news is that some people confuse attraction with love and think they should act on the feeling of attraction.

You can't make a marriage last if either party confuses attraction with love and wants to start a new relationship with the latest person to "ring their bell."

If you're married, and you feel attraction for another person, enjoy the feeling, but do not act on the feeling. Some people feel guilty. They think they may not love their partner if they feel attracted to someone else.

Don't feel guilty. And, don't make your partner feel guilty if your partner feels a powerful attraction for another person. It's human. It's automatic. You can't help it. But, you can understand it, and choose not to do anything about it.

Attraction isn't love; it's simply physical attraction

Physical attraction can be so powerful that it feels like love — but it isn't. We now know that love is the bundle of feelings that come from memories of positive shared experiences.

You can't be in love with this stranger you've just met, who "rings your bell." You have no shared positive experiences. You have no memories with feelings attached. You have no bundle of love on which to base a marriage.

Do not make the disasterous mistake of running off to be with this stranger based solely on the primeval physical attraction your imprinting causes you to feel. **Do Not!**

Teenagers should be taught about attraction so they understand the physical attraction they feel the first time somebody matches their imprinting.

Some of the variables in physical attraction

Here are some of the physical attraction variables that are important to different people. A few of these may be critical variables to you, but each is critical to someone.

- Hair: length, type (curly, straight, long, short), color, texture
- Facial features: shape, width, length
- Skin color: texture and feel
- Body shape: sexual features, legs, neck, lip tension, taste
- Feel of the skin and flesh: hardness, softness
- Voice tone: timbre, pace, softness, hardness, high or low
- Sense of humor: laugh, giggle
- Smell: skin, hair, breath
- Gestures: head, hands, and arm movements
- Posture: carriage, roundness, straightness
- Tension level of the body: relaxed, tense
- Height: tall, short, medium
- Weight: light, heavy
- Energy level: calm, intense, easy-going, hard driving
- Gait: walking, running
- Confidence level: cocky, shy, confident

What attraction variables are you imprinted with?

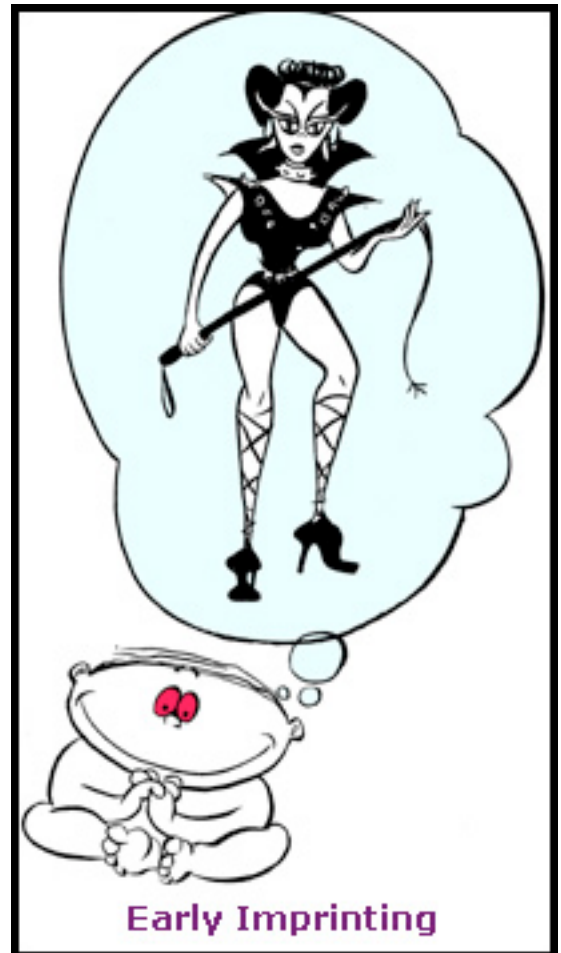
Just for fun. Take a few minutes to find out what you are imprinted for.

Bring to mind two different people to whom you have felt physical attraction. Go over the previous list and see which items were similar between the two. Then take a third person and go over the list again.

If you have items that match on three people, the odds are good that those items are part of your imprinting. If there is a resounding “yes” for you on any one item, then that item is important to you.

This is a fun and useful exercise. After you're married, you need to be aware of the power of attraction. When you find yourself strongly attracted, enjoy the feeling, but do nothing else. It's normal. It's natural. You have no control over it.

You do, however, have complete control over what you do after feeling attracted.



If being attracted to someone outside your relationship is a concern, please read the "Couple's Pledge" in Appendix A at the end of this book.

Love vs Infatuation

It's easy for others to tell whether you are in love or just infatuated. But, it can be hard for *you* to tell the difference.

You can't tell the difference because when you're "crazy in love." You've lost your senses. You've lost your mind. Infatuation is a delightful form of madness. It's like a short term mental illness, where you lose your ability to reason.

Here's how to tell the difference

Love is real, and if you take good care of it, it will last a lifetime. And love can grow.

Infatuation is unreal. The madness of infatuation creates many unrealities. You perceive your love object as vastly more wonderful than is real. You perceive your feeling of infatuation as though it will last forever.

Once infatuation peaks, it starts disappearing until it's gone. *It always goes away.*

After infatuation goes away, reality comes back to you. You see that your love object has faults, flaws, and the normal number of human quirks. You can't see that when you're infatuated.

After infatuation disappears and reality returns, any bonds you formed with your partner during your madness will stay with you forever. It's those bonds, the memories and the feelings that make up your bundle of love that might lead to marriage and a committed relationship.

So, love is real, and it lasts.

Infatuation is magical, mystical, very unreal, and it always goes away.

Is it Love or Infatuation?

It's hard to tell the difference between love and infatuation, because they are so intertwined. I'll do my best to unscramble them for you.

Love is a collection of memories of shared experiences of, about, and with your partner. The memories come with feelings attached, which come together in a giant bundle of feelings of love.

Infatuation is a hormonal state that turbo-charges those shared experiences.

Example: Agnes and Harold are enjoying mutual infatuation. They go to dinner. You and I might think that everything about the experience was ordinary, yet to them everything about the experience creates a magical memory.

The food was the best they ever tasted. The music was incredibly good. In fact, one song became "Our Song." They danced. It was heavenly holding each other in their arms. They'll never forget what they whispered into each other's ears.

Okay, you got the idea. A shared positive experience creates memories with attached feelings. This is true of experiences Agnes and Harold shared before they came down with infatuation, and it will be true throughout their married life.



The hormonal, unreal state of infatuation turbo-charges those shared positive memories, and allows them to create huge, fantastic, powerful memories, with wonderfully strong feelings attached.

Because of the infatuation, the bundle of love that they will carry into their marriage will be much larger than it would have been if neither had come down with infatuation.

"Is it love or is it infatuation?" isn't exactly the right question

This question suggests that they are opposed. They aren't. They are vastly different. One goes, the other stays. One is real, the other is unreal.

But while under the influence of infatuation, normal every day experiences take on an intensity that creates very strong positive feelings that will last, even when the infatuation disappears.

It isn't "love vs infatuation;" they work together. Infatuation super-charges everyday experiences to create the strong memories and feelings that become real love.

The Dangers of Infatuation

If you don't know the difference between love and infatuation, you could conclude that your loving feelings went away when the infatuation disappeared. Brides have mistakenly canceled weddings, thinking their love was gone, when the infatuation left.

If you think infatuation is love, you can do crazy things under its influence. You might just be tempted to run off to a desert island with your new infatuee.

For many people, strong attraction can lead almost immediately into infatuation, and then all thinking and reality testing goes out the window.

All the things that were important in your life before, are no longer important. School, work, family, hobbies, plans and ambitions all seem so unimportant now that you're infatuated with your new attractive stranger.

Remember! Infatuation is madness. You can't think straight, so don't do anything you'll regret when infatuation leaves you and reason returns.

Wait until your feet are back on the ground, you've got your senses back and you can make reasoned, rational decisions. You've got time. If there is real love under all the hormones, your bundle will be there when your madness leaves.

If you have concerns about infatuation outside your present relationship, please read Appendix A "The Couple's Pledge," at the end of this book.

Definition of Infatuation

We need a new definition of infatuation, because the common definitions don't help us. I'll show you what I mean.

One dictionary's definition of infatuation: "Be inspired by an intense, but short lived, passion or admiration for." That's only a tiny part of the story.

Wikipedia's definition of infatuation is much more complete, but they don't define infatuation, they instead, refer to it as "Limerance" a word first coined by Dorothy Tennov a professor of psychology.

Here's an excerpt of Wikipedia's "Limerance"

"Limerence is a state of mind characterized by intrusive thinking, longing, uncertainty, hope, misperception, fantasies, and passion.

Limerence has been described as 'having a crush,' 'infatuation,' 'passionate love,' 'puppy love,' 'romantic love,' or 'being in love.'

It is important to note that limerence is neither love nor sexual attraction. Love, sexual attraction, and limerence can all exist without each other or any or all of them can coexist together."

Additionally, Tennov lists certain basic components that expand the definition very helpfully.

Limerence has certain basic components

- intrusive thinking about the limerent object
- acute longing for reciprocation
- some fleeting and transient relief from unrequited limerence through vivid imagining of action by the limerent object that means reciprocation
- fear of rejection and unsettling shyness in the limerent object's presence
- intensification through adversity
- acute sensitivity to any act, thought, or condition that can be interpreted favorably, and an extraordinary ability to devise or invent "reasonable" explanations for why neutral actions are a sign of hidden passion in the limerent object
- an aching in the chest when uncertainty is strong

- buoyancy (a feeling of walking on air) when reciprocation seems evident
- a general intensity of feeling that leaves other concerns in the background
- a remarkable ability to emphasize what is truly admirable in the limerent object and to avoid dwelling on the negative or render it into another positive attribute.

I consider this list to be a wonderfully accurate listing of the characteristics of infatuation. They are all present when a person experiences infatuation.

My Definition of Infatuation: Temporary Insanity

I define infatuation as "Temporary insanity that makes a person deaf, blind, and dumb."

Infatuation is a form of madness. (It is also the about the most wonderful, amazing, incredibly good feeling we can have.)

Infatuation feels like love, looks like love, and is very commonly mistaken for love — but *infatuation isn't love*. We know it can't be love, because it *always fades away* and doesn't come back — with the same person. Whereas love will stay after infatuation disappears.

Infatuation feels so good that some people even become serial infatuators, jumping from partner to partner, always seeking the high that infatuation brings. Infatuation can be addictive.

Infatuation makes even insignificant things seem "magical"

My definition of infatuation includes it's role as an intensifier of feelings.

Infatuation does powerful, magical things. Infatuation 'magnifies' the intensity of feelings you get from shared experiences with your partner. Real love is the sum of the positive bonds you build up from shared positive experiences with your partner. The size of the good feeling is intensified, or 'magnified' by the madness of infatuation.

Infatuation blinds you to your partner's human-ness

My definition of infatuation includes the insanity it produces: Infatuation is a form of madness because you lose touch with reality.

Eventually, you're going to realize that your partner *isn't* the most perfect, beautiful or handsome, and loving person in the whole world.

You'll see that your partner is really just a person with the normal number of flaws and idiosyncrasies.

While you're infatuated, however, you're 'blind' to your partner's faults, weaknesses, and failings. It seems your partner is perfect in so many ways.



Infatuation makes you 'dumb' and 'deaf,' too

Infatuation makes you 'dumb' because you lose touch with things that are really important to you in your life, like your education, your parents and family, your friends, your career, your goals, your values, and much more.

Life becomes temporarily all about your partner and those other things seem to fade in importance.

Infatuation makes you 'deaf' to the opinions and observations of family and friends who care a great deal about you.

Infatuation always goes away. While it seems painful at the time, it's a good thing that the madness fades away and reality returns.

No one could go through life with the intensity of focus infatuation brings. During infatuation, you could talk all night. You can survive with almost no sleep. You can ignore your responsibilities. You may pay no attention to your health.

Not everybody gets infatuated with their partner. You still can have a wonderful life-long, bonded relationship with your partner without ever having been infatuated. But, If you don't know or realize what infatuation is, you can make some very big mistakes.

Jeanette

Jeanette was happily married, raising a family, but had never felt the madness of infatuation with her husband. So, when she began to feel infatuated with a coworker, she thought that finally, she had found her true love, and she must have missed true love in her marriage.

Poor Jeanette simply didn't understand what infatuation was. She didn't realize that what she had with her husband was real love, and what she had with her coworker was simply infatuation that would soon fade away.

Alicia

Alicia didn't realize that infatuation would fade away, and when it did a few months before her wedding, she thought she had fallen out of love with her fiancé.

She got cold feet and canceled her engagement. She had simply begun to see him as a real person, not the unreal person she had conjured up under the influence of infatuation.

Infatuation and You

May you have the good fortune to experience infatuation with your partner. May you cherish the incredibly intense memories of shared bonding experiences you have while infatuated.

May you wisely accept the return of reality and lovingly accept that your partner is simply a person with all the strengths and failings of any normal human.

While bonded with your partner, may you *never* experience the madness of infatuation again — with someone else. And, if you do, may you turn away, run with the wind, and know that infatuation with another person is madness gone astray.

If you need to find out how to get over an unwanted infatuation, read Appendix B: "Help Me, Please."

Romantic Love

Agnes is strongly attracted to Harold. Harold is infatuated with Agnes. They're dancing cheek to cheek to a romantic love song. The lights are subdued, the dinner was delicious. He brought her flowers.

What are they feeling? They're feeling romantic love. The romantic aspects of the experience serve to further turbo-charge Harold's infatuation. The romantic aspects serve to make Harold even more attractive to Agnes.

In other words, romance serves to heighten whatever feelings each has for the other. Romance creates strong positive memories of a shared experience.

Remember, *real love is the memory of positive shared experiences*, along with the bundle of feelings that are attached to those experiences.

You could say that romance helps produce stronger bonds of love.

Quit ducking the question. Is Romantic love real love?

No. We've already described real love as the collection of memories and the bundle of loving feelings of happy shared experiences.

Romance serves to make stronger memories and add to the bundle of love with which the couple will begin their marriage, but it isn't the real love we're looking for.

It's sad to say, but most couples let the romance fade away after the honeymoon. The guy no longer likes to dance. He rarely brings flowers. He doesn't call her just to hear her voice. He only calls her when he has something to say.

If the romantic love disappears after the honeymoon, does it mean the real love has gone?

No, of course not. Even the happiest marriages of the most loving couples sometimes let the romance fade away. They still love each other. They just don't have all that much romance anymore.

If real love lasts, and romantic love fades away, they can't be the same thing.

Can you still have romantic love after the honeymoon?

Yes, you can. To make your marriage last, your goal is to keep adding to the bundle of loving feelings. Romance helps create new positive memories of shared experiences and the loving feelings that are attached to the memories.

We strongly recommend that couples plan to keep some romance in their marriage. The whole next page is filled with thoughts about that.

Before you go there, it's important to understand how you and your partner change after the honeymoon.

You came together as a couple and decided to marry for a number of reasons:

- Somehow, we humans are genetically and hormonally driven to find a mate. It's a basic human need.
- Possibly, you found each other attractive. Attraction is built in to us as youths.
- Probably, one or both of you experienced infatuation. That's a hormonal madness.
- Courting rituals create romantic experiences. Those rituals are built in to us.

Then, you marry, and have a honeymoon (or not).

You've got all your needs met; the drive is gone.

Reality has set in. You've responded to all those human genetic and hormonal drives and urges. You've found your mate and you've settled down. There's no more thrill of the hunt. There's no more urgency in attracting and being attractive. The infatuation is long gone.

We humans are driven by our needs. When we're hungry we eat. By eating, we've responded to the need and we're no longer hungry. We want sex. Then we have it. Now, we aren't needy. We need to work, so we find work. Once we have work, we're satisfied.

The need to meet, court, and mate drove us to marry. Now, we don't have those same needs again. They've been satisfied.

Most people turn their attention to other things, things that satisfy some other need they have. Most people take their relationship and their partner for granted.

Those people have a 50% chance of making their marriage last.

Some people — hopefully you're one of them — commit to make their marriage happy and to make it last. Those people are willing to commit 5 minutes a day to learn the skills and habits that make a marriage last.

**If you're interested in how to do that, go to
[Join the Team](#)**

Keep Romance Alive

You're fighting a tough battle. It's normal and natural for romance to fade as the years go by in your marriage. The good news is that it can be done. If you and your partner both want to keep romance as the magical spice for your marriage, you can do it. Millions before you have done it. You can, too.

Keep romance alive by understanding how it will change.

The things you do to keep romance alive change over time as your relationship matures. Before the wedding, romance is an extension of courting. Dining, moonlight, music, romantic settings, flowers for no reason, phone calls to hear your voice. All of these things and much more are part of the courting process, products of attraction and maybe infatuation.

Romance after a few years of marriage may be holding hands when you take a walk. Or, sitting quietly together as you read, and from time to time reading excerpts to each other. As long as you understand how romance matures with time, you won't have expectations of a lifetime of dancing, candlelight, and love songs.

Some people can even keep up the dancing, candle light, and love songs. It just takes work. If you both decide it's worth it, we can help.

Why does it take work to keep romance alive?

Romance after marriage is no longer driven by genes and hormones. So, you have to substitute commitment and effort. The easiest way to do that is to make it a habit.

Doris and Bill have had a weekly lunch date for nearly 50 years. It's a deeply ingrained habit. Stan and Norma go out to dinner, then to a play or opera, or to a lecture at least once a month. They've been doing it for many, many years. They are committed to it. They've made it a habit.

You and your partner could decide to do something you both enjoy. Make a habit of it, and each time you do it, you will both know that this is the spice of romance that you've added to your marriage.

Appendix A: Sample Couple's Pledge

- We each understand that the other may, from time to time be attracted to someone else. We each accept that this is natural, and it is not something one can control.
- We each understand that the other may respond to those feelings of attraction with mild flirting.
- We each commit that any flirting will be balanced by an accompanying communication relating to our commitment to our relationship. In this way we can freely express our feelings of attraction for another, without in any way leading the attractive person to think there is any chance for anything more.
- We each commit that any such feelings of attraction will be used as a stimulus to refresh and reaffirm our feelings of commitment to each other.

You may or may not feel comfortable with this sort of agreement. If you do feel comfortable with it, you'll discover that it covers the major concerns and risks that each person in a relationship faces.

Attraction is built in to us by nature, and cannot be avoided. Flirting is also natural, and most people find it to be fun, and find they get good feelings from it. This pledge recognizes those realities. It also recognizes the very important commitment that each person has to the primary relationship, and every experience of attraction is used as a trigger to cause a renewed commitment to the relationship.

Appendix B:

Help Me — Please!

How to Get Over Infatuation When You're Married, Committed, or Too Young

Sometimes people are desperate to get over infatuation that they don't want, or would ruin their marriage. Here's an email I got recently:

Ken,

I read through a fair amount of the site. It helped.

I have been married for ** years. I have 2 sons. I am turning ** in a month.

Recently, I have met a woman at work (** years old) whom (after reading your site) I realize I have a strong attraction to that is leading into infatuation. She does not know I feel this way by the way. However, the infatuation is just as you defined it on the site to a T. It's madness and uncontrollable.

I struggle to eat, can't sleep, trying to talk to my wife about it (but the subject is hurtful so I am careful with my words). This is such a nightmare. I feel like a foolish schoolboy.

I feel lost. I don't want to ruin my family or marriage but I cannot seem to unhook the infatuation. Maybe I just need to weather it.

I want to protect my marriage. I'm scared.

Please advise,

Signed *****

As you can see, this poor fellow is desperate to get over infatuation, and is scared.

How Did It Turn Out?

I don't know. I sent him the suggestions I've included here, and I never heard from him again. He didn't respond to my follow up emails. Maybe he was able to get over infatuation, or maybe he didn't really want to.

You could tell he was terribly torn. Infatuation is such a powerful drug some people just can't give it up. Even if you show them how, they won't take the medicine because the infatuation feels so wonderful. And, also, the most powerful medicine you can use to get over infatuation is bitter and disgusting.

The Fastest Way To Get Over Infatuation

Here's the email I sent in response to his request:

Hi,*****,

You did the right thing, reaching out for help.

You are wise enough to know that this infatuation could ruin your family and marriage. To get over infatuation, you can use positive and negative strategies. The most powerful are called "aversive" or negative strategies. But, they are ugly and bitter tasting medicines.

I don't know anything about you, so I'm going to give you a shotgun blast of possibilities. I've helped others through this, and sometimes it has worked so quickly they were able to get over infatuation in one day.

Your goal is to get over infatuation, and you have to do it fast, cleanly, and quickly. The madness of the infatuation will fight you, but you can do it, and one or several of these possibilities will work for you.

Infatuation takes over your reasoning powers and limits your ability to think. The mechanism it uses is your imagination. You begin imagining you with her. You imagine all kinds of wonderful things.

Your most powerful fire-fighting tool is your ability to change what you are imagining. You get over infatuation by taking back control over of your imagination that's endangering you, your wife, your marriage, your sons, and your extended family.

The creative part is choosing how you will distort what you are imagining.

What worked for one guy was to find the most disgusting thing he'd ever heard of, and imagine the girl he was infatuated with doing that. Every time she came into his mind (via his imagination) he interrupted what he was imagining by imagining her doing that thing that he found so disgusting.

Very quickly, every time he thought of her, he had two paired thoughts: one a positive image brought on by the infatuation, and another disgusting thought brought up on purpose to counter the first thought. He almost took it too far, because the infatuation quickly melted away, and then, in order to be able to continue as her coworker, he had to stop imagining her doing that which disgusted him so much.

One fellow was very religious, and believed in the devil. He chose to see the woman he was infatuated with as the devil inside the body of the attractive woman. Every time he thought of her, he imagined that he could see the devil at work. He used his strong religious beliefs and his imagination in defense of his wife, kids, family and friends.

One man couldn't find anything that disgusted him enough. What worked for him was imagining himself at age 70 bagging groceries because he had lost all his retirement savings through a divorce. So, every time he found himself thinking of her, he paired it with the image of him being old and bagging groceries, and the infatuation left him quickly.

In summary, things that have helped others:

1. Imagining something disgusting you can pair with any positive imaginings.
2. Imagining something you fear or are worried about, like poverty in retirement.
3. Imagining something you desire for yourself:
 - Integrity: the pride you will feel when you successfully honor the vows you took when you wed.
 - Successful parenting: the joy you'll feel when you've finished raising your boys and they go forward with you as their role model.
 - A marriage that lasts: imagine yourself and your wife in your old age, having weathered the storms and temptations of life, holding each others gnarled hand, still in love and an inspiration to others.

Now, I need some feedback. Did any of these ideas ring a bell with you? If so, which are you going to try? If not, I'll need to know several things about you:

1. What is your greatest strength? We can use that to fight this fire (if you don't know what your greatest strength is, I'll point you to a free test you can take to find out.)
2. What things scare you?
3. What is your biggest worry?
4. What are you most proud of about yourself?

I'm glad you chose me to reach out to. I've helped others get over infatuation. We'll get this thing licked.

One more helpful thought. It will be easier to get over infatuation if you can start imagining you and your wife working together to build a truly extraordinary marriage. One that is very loving and will last till death parts you.

In other words, you aren't asking yourself to give up this incredibly desirable seeming temptation to continue on with the seemingly less exciting same old, same old, marriage you've been having.

Use your imagination to see the possibilities of re-igniting some of the fire in your marriage. That's the purpose of the "Make Marriage Last" website we are building and we'd be delighted to have you and your wife join.

My best to you,

Ken Johnston

If you'd like to join the team of couples committed to making their marriages last, go to:

<http://www.relationship-insurance.com>