



Most of us have probably heard John Michael Montgomery's catchy tune, "Life's A Dance." To quote, "Life's a dance, you learn as you go; sometimes you lead, sometimes you follow...." As a former dancer myself, I concur. Yes, life is a dance; but more specifically, marriage is a dance.

We have all been to a wedding or other social event where we have witnessed couples dancing. It is interesting to note the difference in how the more experienced couples dance compared to the inexperienced couples. Often the more mature couples dance beautifully, as they glide around the floor in near perfect rhythm with each other. They turn together in wonderful synchronicity and flow through the dance. It is quite obvious that they've been at this awhile. Then look at the newbies. Unless they've taken ballroom dance lessons, you'll see an entirely different picture. They throw their arms around each other and waddle back and forth like penguins. When they try to dance and actually follow the steps, you'll often observe an awkward display. One may be barking directions at the other while they fight for the lead. You can only hope that while they step on each other's toes, they realize that this is all part of the process of learning how to dance together. The inexperienced couples cannot come close to the way the more experienced couples light up the room!

Both my husband and I brought a love for dance to our marriage. I minored in dance in college and have performed in many a show. Troy not only performed, but also had taught ballroom dance lessons. Since we both have a background in dance, I had the misconception that when we danced together it would be rather exquisite, blending our love for each other with our love for this art. Oh, how I was wrong! I quickly realized that his and my style of dance were very different. When we danced as a couple, I found it very challenging to let Troy lead. I felt like he was stifling my way of dance and I wanted to do my own thing. Thankfully my husband knew how important it was for me to be able to trust that he had our best interests in mind as he took the lead. As Troy allowed God to mold him into the man He was calling and challenging him to be in our marital union, I was able to trust his leadership as head of our home and keeper of my heart. I learned to trust his lead and I grew to love our dance!

In dance, when the man takes the lead, he is concurrently challenged to be firm and gentle, allowing the woman to feel confident and secure as he whirls her around the dance floor. As he leads the dance, the man's arms must be so firm and secure that the lady could push down on them and they would not move. He essentially is the pillar she can lean on, trust and continually come back to in order to re-center herself. Marriage requires the same from a man. Similarly, the man's role is to assist his lady so she can shine in their dance together. He enables her to look and feel beautiful. In a marriage where roles are established and secure, trust is developed and each spouse feels free and encouraged to grow and mature while developing the God-given talents they have been blessed with. In this way both husband and wife have the freedom and support to grow the way God created them to grow. As a couple, they come together and are able to flourish in their marital dance.

When a couple marries, they arrive on the scene as newlyweds with a vision for what they want their marriage to look like. They have specific expectations and goals. As their life together begins to unfold, they quickly realize how much work, time and sacrifice is required in order to achieve their vision. With each having their own ideas, habits, and ways of doing things, couples often find the journey of blending two lives into one to be challenging. The sin of pride might make one think that their way of doing things, their way of dancing, is the only right way or at the very least, the best way. If couples do not let go of this misconception and rather be open to their spouse's way of dancing, not only will they find themselves in an unhappy marriage, but they will also be missing out on all the wonderful attributes that their spouse has to offer.

As they blend their two lives, couples often "step" on each other's toes. As time goes on, a degree of competency is attained. Spouses learn what is important to their beloved: what makes them smile, what causes them hurt, what their strengths and weaknesses are and how they can blend these to become a team and a union in the way God designed them to be. From day one, Troy always referred to us as a team. I love this concept! It is so fitting for marriage.

Always remember, you and your spouse are on the SAME team! Those who commit to the long haul, and put in the time and effort, move beyond competency to a deep satisfaction and joy in knowing that they can now speak to their spouse's heart and likewise be understood. They develop a rhythm and learn how to dance.