



His Needs, Her Needs: Building an Affair-Proof Marriage

Willard F. Harley Jr.

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In the classic bestseller *His Needs, Her Needs*, Willard F. Harley, Jr., identifies the ten most vital needs of men and women and shows husbands and wives how to satisfy those needs in their spouses. He provides guidance for becoming irresistible to your spouse and for loving more creatively and sensitively, thereby eliminating the problems that often lead to extramarital affairs.

This revised and expanded edition has been updated throughout and includes new writing that highlights the special significance of intimate emotional needs in marriage.

His Needs, Her Needs: Building an Affair-Proof Marriage Details

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Author : Willard F. Harley Jr.

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From Reader Review His Needs, Her Needs: Building an Affair-Proof Marriage for online ebook

Jana Allen says

I liked the overall point this book made. Everyone has emotional needs, and we should try to meet the needs of our spouse.

The problem I have with this book is that I felt the author justifies (especially men) going and having an affair because their needs were not being met. He makes no exceptions for sicknesses, going back to school, or just hard times. I felt he was especially hard on women saying they need to look just like their husbands want (hair style, perfect makeup, ideal weight, clothing styles) and that they need to be available **WHENEVER** their husband is feeling intimate. He also says that spouses should not pursue any recreational activities without each other. Spouses need to spend **AT LEAST** 15 hours a week together with no interruptions from kids or phones. I tried to keep in mind that this author sees a lot of extreme situations and marriages that were on the rocks.

I really wanted to like this book, and I did like it in theory, but it was too extreme for me and the author kept making me so mad!

Hoku Ho says

This book the cornerstone of my marriage. My husband and I read it early on and I really feel that it was the secret to our success and smooth sailing through the rough patches and growing pains we faced in our first few years. It helps couples put their fingers on their own needs and the needs of their spouses, and gives you a common language and understanding to draw from, which vastly improves your ability to communicate about these important issues.

The sub-text of the title of this book is "how to affair proof your marriage". It really does deliver on this...My step-dad, who is a pastor, uses this book for counseling couples on the verge of divorce or trying to get through/avoid adultery and uses it to help guide them back to a place where they can make each other happy again. I know he is not the only person who has found it useful in that way. It does have some Christian references and the author is a Christian himself, but the book is not a "Christian book", so Christians and non-Christians alike will find this book useful.

I really recommend it for any married couple or couple on the verge of marriage. It is very practical, well researched, and (with a little work and compromise) easily implementable. It's principals have guided my marriage and helped my husband and I make it to our 8th year and beyond more in love with each other than ever!

Kristin Call says

brilliant book. Will be buying this one to read every christmas break. It's a great way to start a fresh year and I would do well to be reminded of the concepts in here frequently.

Nayereh Ahmadian says

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Keith says

This book is largely about preventing or recovering from an affair. Lest you say that this doesn't apply to "me", he points out that a person (even a person with solid religious belief, and firm moral conviction) may be tempted into an affair, seduced by a "relationship built upon fantasy, not reality." In addition, by meeting the needs of your spouse, and by having your needs met, you will transform your marriage into something wonderful. It is also well written. Now, on to the basics of the book:

"The Man's five most basic needs in marriage tend to be:

1. Sexual fulfillment
2. Recreational companionship
3. An attractive spouse
4. Domestic support
5. Admiration"

(Page 12)

He writes "tend to be" because this is what he typically finds. To determine your preferences and those of

your spouse, there is a questionnaire at the back, and if that isn't enough, more are available at his web site.

"The woman's five most basic needs in marriage tend to be:

1. Affection
2. Conversation
3. Honesty and openness
4. Financial Support
5. Family commitment"

(Page 13)

"The first cause of conflict, *failure to care* and the second, *failure to protect*." ... This book addresses the failure to care - the failure to meet each other's most important emotional needs. ... failure to protect is the subject of a companion book I've written, Love Busters: Overcoming the Habits that Destroy Romantic Live. (Page 9-10)

Chapters

1. How Affair Proof is Your Marriage?
 2. Why Your Love Bank Never Closes
 3. The First Thing She Can't Do Without - Affection (1)
 4. The First Thing He Can't Do Without - Sexual Fulfillment (1)
 5. She Needs Him to Talk to Her - Conversation (2)
 6. He Needs Her to Be His Playmate - Recreational Companionship (2)
 7. She Needs to Trust Him Totally - Honesty and Openness (3)
 8. He Needs a Good-looking Wife - An Attractive Spouse (3)
 9. She Needs Enough Money to Live Comfortably - Financial Support (4)
 10. He Needs Peace and Quiet - Domestic Support (4)
 11. She Needs Him to Be a Good Father - Family Commitment (5)
 12. He Needs Her to Be Proud of Him - Admiration (5)
 13. How to Survive an Affair
 14. From Incompatible to Irresistible
- Appendix: Analysis of Emotional Needs
Questionnaires

His web site is a lot more than the typical advertisement. There is a lot of meat on this site.

<http://www.marriagebuilders.com/index...>

This page describes the love bank concept.

<http://www.marriagebuilders.com/graph...>

Wow, no point in me trying to write much of a summary. Here it is:

<http://www.marriagebuilders.com/graph...>

Justin Tapp says

My wife and I listened to this book together on a long car ride, where we could pause and discuss when

prompted. This is the worst book on marriage that I have read, there are a host of others I would recommend above it. While Harley claims to write from a Christian worldview, the Gospel and the meaning of marriage is completely absent from this book. That, alone, makes it ineffectual and makes me sad that it's held up by so many Christians. If you have an incorrect view of what marriage represents, then you will also diagnose and treat conflict within the marriage incorrectly. In this book, humans are nothing more than products of biology responding to various stimuli and cognitive biases. Therefore, this is a 2-star book at best. My understanding is much of the material of the book comes from the 1970s, even though the first printing was 1995 and this was an updated 2001 version.

Over this book I would recommend Arterburn's Seven Minute Marriage Solution, Emerson Eggerichs' Love and Respect, and many more.

Harley breaks down the basic needs of husbands and wives into five each, focusing more on the male aspects. He is a psychologist and I felt he was coming at everything from an old-school Freudian approach-- everything on the male side comes down to sexual fulfillment. He makes the false claim that 50% of spouses are sexually unfaithful. The reader is treated to the sordid details of stories of extramarital affairs, perhaps made up whole cloth by Harley.

Men's needs:

1. Sexual fulfillment
2. Recreational companionship- the wife should take an interest in doing things the husband likes-- watching football, for example. If she tries it and really doesn't like it, she should find something else they can do together. Couples should spend "15 hours a week" of "undivided attention" on each other, doing the same things.
3. An attractive spouse- there is very little in this book about acceptance and celebration of differences. The wife should change her weight, clothes, and hair to suit her husband. If he doesn't find her "irresistible" he will likely have a passionate affair from which he'll never completely recover.
4. Domestic support- The wife should not pursue a career, and if she does work household chores should be divided according to the needs of the husband. Harley had a good point here about making a list of everything that needed to be done in the house and having each partner put priorities on the item. Whoever ranks something with the highest priority gets to be responsible for that chore.
5. Admiration - This mostly came at the end of the book, which is a shame because respect really is ultimate to a husband and is the driver (not sex) behind many of the affairs Harley describes.

Women's needs:

1. Affection - Men should learn to be more affectionate. (Eggerichs would just focus on #5 above and #1 here).
2. Conversation - women have affairs with men who will actively listen to them.
3. Honesty and openness - Husbands should have no problem turning their schedules over to their wives, especially if they've been unfaithful.
4. Financial support - Men should be the breadwinners.
5. Family commitment - Fathers should be dads, otherwise women will have affairs with other men who will raise their children better-- including relatives of the biological father. Harley writes that there should be 15 hours together with the children (is that added to the 15 hours of undivided attention for the spouse as well, or do parents get out of that?).

I think my wife was most offended by the section where Harley tells women readers to do their hair nicely, consume fewer calories, exercise more, and consult magazine articles for tips on beauty, or else their husband will cheat on them. Most books on marriage deal with the importance of the man fulfilling his wife's needs during daylight hours ("women are ovens, men are microwaves") by being a supportive husband, this

did not put as much impetus on the man. It's up to the woman to respond to her husband's wants, no matter what.

There is no grace in this book, no acceptance of your spouse as a spiritual creature with a history and a brain, no dealing with expectations or letting go of them and preconceived notions of marital bliss, and no growing together to be like Christ. Your wife is a biological partner you can have fun with, nothing more. While he strongly cautions against divorce, he is pretty flippant in saying sometimes these things just don't work out.

Read this book if you're not a Christian but want a step-by-step how-to guide to fix your marriage as though it were a piece of IKEA furniture.

Isaac says

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April Lyn says

I thought people might have been exaggerating when they claimed this was the best marriage book they'd ever read, but this book was really something. The author's insights are fantastic - for married, divorced, and single people alike. I thought of about five people I'd like to lend it to. I think everyone could benefit from reading it. The appendices were also very helpful.

If you plan on reading this book, start now! I put it off for a couple years because I have SO many books on

my shelf, but it was really, really helpful. You can definitely start implementing the books suggestions/activities immediately.

And concerning all the negative reviews on the book, here is my opinion: Adultery is a very inflammatory subject and most (if not all) people cannot talk about it without becoming emotional (and sometimes, irrational). The book neither "condones" adultery, nor "blames innocent parties" - it merely explains what each person in a relationship can PROACTIVELY do to have the best chance at keeping a marriage that is fulfilling to both parties. Neither person should "have to" do anything, but the idea is - if you hope to stay happily married - you will be willing and even excited about acting/looking/talking/etc in a way that is pleasing to your spouse.

Christiandude says

Although the author purports to be Christian, I have a hard time taking that seriously given the content of the book.

To be fair, I believe the needs tests for spouses included in the book are of value.

Harley takes a very shallow, worldly approach to marriage. In my opinion, he does not show any evidence of writing from a Christian perspective. He seems to almost condone adultery, if the innocent spouse wasn't meeting the "needs" of the guilty party. Similarly, he appears to place blame which should be for the guilty spouse on the shoulders of the innocent party.

Regarding my observation of the shallow view held by the author, he condones men being demanding on their wives regarding their physical appearances. Similarly, he condones women demanding their husbands be astute providers of wealth.

Harley seems to lack a basic Biblical understanding of marriage as a covenant between the spouses and God.

I did give this book a fair shake, initially giving the author the benefit of the doubt, however, my suspicions were confirmed when I viewed one of his websites, wherein he unjustly chastened a person who was the innocent party in a divorce due to adultery. While we are in the New Covenant, the Old sometimes sheds light on understanding. Neither the Old nor New place any blame on an innocent party in adultery. In the Old if you were guilty, you had your arse stoned, there was no namby pamby exemption for not having your selfish needs met.

In conclusion, this book goes beyond bad and is just plain dangerous. The Bible itself is more a wealth of information on a good marriage.

I would not recommend this book except as paper to start the grill!

Tim says

This book is terrible. Unlike many good marriage books out there that encourage you to look beyond your selfishness, this book plunges you into selfish behavior. This is NOT a Christian book, it is purely secular

with no Biblical basis. If you focus on your unmet marriage needs, trust me your marriage is not going to get better.

In full disclosure, I read this book 5 years ago and thought it correct at the time. It nearly ended my marriage as I basically came to the place that my marriage could not meet my needs. I gave this book to a friend, it did end his marriage. I feel so badly about giving this book to him.

Katie Mccarthy says

My husband and I read this before we married and at each anniversary we go back over how we are each doing with the needs. At least for us, this book has been a God-send.

Charmin says

Highlights:

1. Men tend to try to meet needs that they would value and women do the same. But the needs of men and women are often very different and by wasting effort trying to meet the wrong needs, a couple fails to make each other happy.
 2. When a spouse lacks fulfillment of any of the basic needs, it creates a thirst that must be quenched.
 3. An affair usually begins as a friendship. If any of a spouse's five basic emotional needs goes unmet, that spouse becomes vulnerable to the temptation of an affair.
 4. The couple that plays together stays together.
 5. Men need recreation in their life to keep going.
 6. A woman needs to appreciate her husband for what he already is, not for what he could become if he lived up to her standards.
 7. Transparency is one of the most important qualities in a successful marriage.
 8. Disrespect prevents couples from finding mutually agreeable solutions to their problems. If your spouse considers what you say to be disrespectful, it is.
 9. Negotiation between a husband and wife is an essential building block to the success of any marriage, but without honesty and openness a couple can resolve or decide very little. To have any value, praise must genuinely reflect your feelings.
 10. Happily married couples are already aware of this principle and have learned how to make their marriage a full-time priority. Spouses who are partners in life check with each other throughout the day to coordinate their decisions and activities.
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החלטתי לכתוב ביקורת על הספר הזה כי חשבתי שזה יהיה מעניין לראות מה חשבו אנשים אחרים על הספר הזה. הספר הזה הוא לא משהו חדש, אבל הוא משהו שחשוב לי לכתוב עליו.

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update: 10/12/2014

החלטתי לכתוב ביקורת על הספר הזה כי חשבתי שזה יהיה מעניין לראות מה חשבו אנשים אחרים על הספר הזה. הספר הזה הוא לא משהו חדש, אבל הוא משהו שחשוב לי לכתוב עליו.

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Update: 11/12/2014

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Andrea says

I changed this from 3 stars to 2 stars after thinking about it overnight. First of all, this book is obviously written by a man! Someone who has never given birth or stayed at home full time with

babies/toddlers/preschoolers.

Secondly, the book definitely uses fear and negativity throughout the chapters. I understand that probably every family that deals with a cheating spouse never thought it would happen to them, but I don't think that it is as common as the author makes it out to be, and even if it is, I don't think it's necessary to continually use guilt and scare tactics to make the reader feel insecure.

Third, the author uses modern ideas of beauty in his chapter on physical appearance. Men should appreciate a woman's natural beauty. A woman shouldn't have to put chemicals on her face, on her skin, or in her hair to keep her husband from cheating on her. It wasn't so long ago that makeup, hair dyes, and trendy hair and clothes were not beautiful to American men and women. Prostitutes were the ones wearing makeup and dying their hair. Now the typical American's idea of a beautiful woman is very thin, tan, wearing makeup, and highlighted hair. It is just a phase and women shouldn't feel forced to take place in that just to make a man happy. There is always going to be someone prettier that your husband comes into contact with to put more "love units" into his "bank." If that's what it takes for him to cheat, it won't matter what you do to make him happy with your physical appearance.

There are some positive ideas in the book. His advice about affection and mutual activities are very helpful. It is also helpful to know that men and women have different needs and that it may be uncomfortable, but trying to meet some of those needs will be helpful in your marriage.

Doaa Aboelsoud says

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