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## **Happy Marriage , Happy Family**

- rediscover your love and respect for your parents**
- to finish the unfinished business with your parents**

By Ren-Jou Liu

Who doesn't desire a happy marriage? Who doesn't want a happy family?

But why do so many marriages end in bitterness, apathy, and eventually divorce? Why are there so many families entangled in arguments, grievances, suppression and hurt? Every married couple desires a happy marriage, but there seems to be a destructive force at work, preventing our dreams from coming true, breaking our hopes to pieces, and throwing us into a black-hole of despair.

The human mind works on two levels – the conscious and the sub-conscious. On the conscious level, we all want to be good and do good, but our sub-conscience sometimes pushes us to hurt one another in an irrational way. Why has it to be like this? What can we do about it?

We all come from families and grow up with parents (of course some people were unable to live with one or both parents for various reasons.) We are affected by our parents, and the environment and experiences of our childhood. They mould our personality and shape our values. Many of these influences are so deeply buried in our sub-conscience that we are totally unaware of them. Sometimes in order to survive hurts and pains, we have “turned on” our defense mechanism to detach ourselves from feelings or to diffuse them. Later on in life as a grown-up, we try to fill in our emotional emptiness, or to avoid it, with addictive or compulsive behaviors such as being a workaholic, gambling, or buying.

The result of this sub-conscious and defensive mechanism in operation, becomes the real culprit to cause destruction and damage to marriages and families; and our ignorance and negligence of it makes us an accomplice to the crime.

So what is the answer? My answer is: to “rediscover” your love and respect for your parents, and to finish the unfinished business with your parents.

I know a young girl who had been living with her divorced mother since small. She held great bitterness against her father. She came to one of my courses and began to realize that it was not right for her to make any judgment on her parents' marriage or divorce. In order to prepare herself to be a good mother and wife, she needed to "rediscover" her love and respect for her father. So that evening, she sent a text message to her father, saying "Dad, I love you!"

The father was surprised to get his daughter's unusual message. He was worried and thought that his child must have some deep problems and was going to kill herself. He called his ex-wife immediately. The mother, who had attended my courses a few years back, realized what had happened. She told her ex-husband that the daughter probably found something new for her life. So the father asked the mother to contact me and my wife for a talk about his relationship with his daughter which was a big step for him.

In another case, there was a young man whose father had an extramarital relationship. The matter was brought to court by the mother and the young man, as a little boy, had to be a witness giving evidence against his father. For years he could not forgive his father, but at the same time he could not forgive himself either for giving evidence against his father in court. His mother had not allowed him any contact with his father, so he had lost touch with him for 7 years. Now, as a young man with a girlfriend, he realized that he would have to ask himself the question: "Can I be a good husband and father?"

So he tried to make contact with his father behind his mother's back. It happened that the father had called the boy's elder sister not long before that. So he was able to get hold of his father's phone number. He struggled for a few days, and eventually got up the courage to call his father. Over the phone, he said, "Dad, it is me, your son, do you still remember me?" The father, excited and emotional, replied, "Son, I miss you very much too."

A week later, he had dinner with his father, and father and son talked at length. The father, unable to remarry because the mother refused to divorce him, now had a 10-year-old son from his affair. A week later, when this young man came to my class and shared his story of "rediscovering his father", his girlfriend, told us happily "He has already been talking about his dad and younger brother for the whole week!"

I felt so grateful and moved to hear stories of this kind. When love has been re-found and come home to the heart of these children, it is the most beautiful thing in the world. I also praise God for blessing me with the opportunity and ability to empower the lives of these amazing young people.

**My dear friends, never give up your efforts to resolve any difficult relationships with your family !**