

15-Minute Marriage Makeover

Refresh Your Relationship, Add Sizzle to Your
Sex Life & Be Happier in Just Minutes a Day



Dustin Riechmann

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By: Dustin Riechmann from Engaged Marriage



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Disclaimer

This book is intended to provide useful advice and fun exercises to help good marriages be even better. It is not a substitute for professional counseling or therapy. The author is not a licensed professional in marriage or family counseling or therapy, and the advice contained herein should be considered educational only and applied at your own risk.

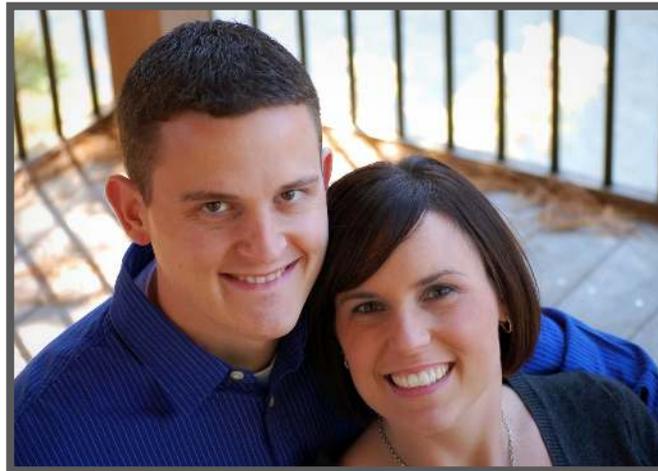
Aside from all this legal stuff, enjoy your spouse and enjoy the book!



What is a Marriage Makeover?

It's not about repairing a torn marriage, but refreshing a good marriage to be the best it can be.

-Dustin



Dedicated to the love of my life, Bethany. Thank you for your patience & crazy-good support. Loves.





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Chapter 1

Introduction to Your Marriage Makeover

I'm not sure where I first heard the advice that would change my marriage and my life forever. At some point a few years ago, someone told me that investing just 15 minutes each day in a passion would allow anyone to achieve greatness.

I heard the words and retained them in the back of my head, but I didn't take action. It wasn't until months later that I would realize just how profound this idea would be for me and my family. While facing an incredibly hectic life full of two careers, small children, community involvement, church activities, a load of debt and no plans to reverse the downward spiral into constant stress and busyness, my wife Bethany and I found ourselves deep in a state of feeling overwhelmed. This was not what we had envisioned for our life together when we got married several years earlier, but it seemed like this was what life as a young family had to be for us.

It was at this low point that we were asked to attend a marriage retreat through our church. While we honestly didn't think we had time to take an entire weekend away amidst all the chaos, we finally decided that we would make it happen. This was the catalyst for what turned out to be a life-changing decision.

Faced with the realization that our Dream Marriage was never going to happen unless we took action, we committed to do better. It was at this time that I remembered the advice about investing in a passion, and I realized that the most important relationship in my life needed some real attention.



From that day forward, we committed to spending 15 minutes each day free from distractions to work on our marriage and take proactive steps toward getting our life in order. We didn't have a Marriage Makeover book to guide us, but we found ourselves working through all of the big issues that were weighing us down.

And it worked. Our marriage is not perfect, but our life is so much more fulfilling, intimate and happy since we worked through our "do-it-yourself" marriage makeover.

After writing and interacting with many busy couples on my [Engaged Marriage](#) blog over the past 18 months, it became clear that our struggles were not unique. Almost every couple faces these same constraints, and I decided to put together a concise plan for others to follow in refreshing their relationship.

I'm so happy that you've decided to share this journey with your spouse, and I know that you'll have a stronger and more love-filled marriage for life after you invest 28 days to improve your communication, romance, sex life and finances together.

Congratulations on being proactive and standing up for your spouse and your family!

How to Use This Book

The 15-Minute Marriage Makeover is broken into 28 unique days that each contain a lesson that applies to your life, a short *Couple Time* Task that you'll complete together, and stories from the personal experiences that my wife and I have shared throughout the good, the bad and the ugly days of our journey from busyness to contentment.

The best way to use to this book is to complete each day in order, which will guide you through all four of the pillars of a thriving marriage. However, if you want to focus on a given area, you are welcome to skip to that



particular chapter. Regardless of which path you choose, please complete Day One, as it's a foundational exercise to find the all-important 15 minutes each day.

The four pillars covered in each weeklong chapter include:

1. Communication that Counts
2. Real Romance for Real Busy Couples
3. Better Sex and Deeper Intimacy
4. Control Your Finances...Together

For each of these topics, the daily lessons are broken into seven days so you will complete them over the course of a week. The first day focuses on a time management topic related to that pillar, days two through six are mini-lessons with 15-minute *Couple Time* Tasks, and day seven is the culminating event for the week requiring a longer (but always fun) time spent together.

Although you can match them to your busy schedule, most couples will find it's best to start each week on Sunday. This will put the longer last lesson on Saturday when you likely have more flexibility to spend more time together.

Let's get started!





Chapter 2

Week 1: Communication that Counts

Communication is the core of any relationship, and it's especially vital to communicate well within your marriage. Remember how much you used to talk early in your relationship and how much you enjoyed it?

We'll get ready because you're about to revisit the power of high-quality communication and rekindle your passion for one another in the process. In Week One, we'll find our 15 minutes of *Couple Time*, make it truly quality time, and learn what it means to Take the Lead in our marriage. By the end of this week, you'll likely feel closer to your husband or wife than you have in years.



15-Minute Marriage Makeover

Day 1: Find Your 15 Minutes

With all of the craziness we face each day, it can sure feel like there just isn't any time available to devote specifically to our spouse. We have careers to build, households to maintain, charitable causes to help and maybe even young children to raise. And then there's that whole sleep thing...

It's not that we don't care about our marriage or love to spend quality time with our husband or wife. We just simply don't have any time!

Well, time may certainly be tight, but you may be surprised how little time is really necessary to make a big impact on the quality of your relationship.

Today's Lesson

15 minutes. What can you do in such a short time?

How about connect deeply with your spouse, take your marriage to a new level of fulfillment and get out of a relationship rut? More specifically, in the next 28 days, you will enhance your communication, rekindle the romantic spark between you, improve your intimacy and sex life, and get your financial lives rolling on a path to success.

And all you have to do to start is **find 15 minutes each day** to make it happen.

Today's Couple Time Task

To kick things off, our first task is simply to figure out where you will find your 15 minutes of *Couple Time* every day. If you are super-busy, your first thought may be that this is just not possible.



What if you found out that you had to spend 15 minutes each day getting a medical treatment that you needed to survive? Less dramatically, what if you could voluntarily give this time to help your spouse achieve a great deal of happiness? Or give yourself a feeling of real contentment and joy?

You can find the time. After all, we are literally only talking about **1% of your day** here!

To get you started, here are some areas where you might be able to cut back a bit:

- * Watch less television (this should do it for most of us)
- * Cut out 15 minutes of mindless web surfing (this should take care of the rest of us)
- * Check Facebook less often
- * Focus better at work so you can leave a bit earlier
- * Only check your email twice per day
- * Cut down on video games
- * Exercise at home instead of driving to the gym
- * Put the kids to bed 15 minutes early

- * Wake up 15 minutes early
- * Quit reading [Engaged Marriage](#) - this is an absolute last resort and is not recommended!

For us, finding our 15 minutes was a matter of using our time more effectively and making our conversation a top priority. Each evening, after we get the kids to bed, we turn off the T.V. and sit together on the couch to talk. After our quiet *Couple Time*, we get back to the busyness, the to-do lists and the multi-tasking like a good, young family!

If something is important to you, you will find the time to address it. I'm confident that **your spouse and marriage are a top priority** in your life, and they certainly deserve your time.

So please go ahead and identify some areas where you can cut back just a bit to find that precious time for your spouse each day. Make a commitment to each other that for the next 28 days, your husband or wife gets 15 minutes of your time each day without exception.

I promise that you won't regret it.



Today's Tips

- ✓ Plan ahead at least a week in advance and put your 15 minutes of Couple Time in your calendars.
- ✓ Remain flexible because life will get in the way some days. You may need to switch your Couple Time from evening to morning (or vice-versa) occasionally or even complete some lessons over the phone if travel is an issue.
- ✓ It may seem difficult to block out distractions and focus solely on your spouse for 15 full minutes during your first few days. Don't worry, it will get easier to put your multi-tasking tendencies aside after you start to see the benefits of your quality time together.





Chapter 4

Week 3: Better Sex and Deeper Intimacy

A healthy and fulfilling sex life is definitely central to a happy, God-centered marriage. True sexual intimacy is not all about your time between the sheets, although that's important too!

If you'd like to have more and better sex, and a deeper intimacy in all areas of your marriage, you're going to love Week Three. Over the next seven days, we'll take some time each day to find the time for better sex, understand what drives our sexuality, and openly discuss what we can do to take our relationship to the next level. When we're done with this week, you may very well feel more sexually excited and united than you have in years.



Day 16: Why Is Sex So Important to You?

If you are like many couples, the discussions you had in Day 15 likely raised some interesting questions about your sex life. If you hadn't talked openly about your sex life, there's a good chance you found some discrepancies in your desired frequency and where sex fits into your personal priority list.

Even if your discussion simply confirmed that you're a perfect sexual match in all ways, there is still a lot of benefit in exploring today's topic. And you may want to look into some treatment for your habitual lying problem.

When is the last time you asked your spouse **what sex really means** to them?

Today's Lesson

While there are exceptions to every rule, there's a good chance a husband and wife will have different feelings about sex and what makes it important to them. In fact, it seems that our feelings toward sex are largely related to...well, our sexuality.

Generally speaking, **men need to have sex to feel close to their mate, while women need to feel close to their mate to have sex.**

Very funny, God.

Again, there are obviously marriages where these motivations aren't the case, but for most of us, this *sexual paradox* is a very real part of our nature. And if you ignore it, or misunderstand it, you could be setting up your marriage for some real strife.

It is vitally important that you understand your spouse's thoughts and feelings around sexual intimacy.

If your wife views sex as a *confirmation* of your closeness, don't you see why **she needs intimacy and romance throughout the day** before she's really interested in getting together physically?

And if you really understand that your husband needs sex as a *means to feel connected* and close to you, doesn't it help you understand why **he can**

feel outright rejected when you roll over and tell him “no” after a long day?

Today's Couple Time Task

Today's time is going to be spent simply talking about this topic. In the best way you can, go ahead and verbalize for your spouse what sex means to you and what makes it important to you. Talk about your ideal frequency for sex in your marriage.

Do not judge your spouse's feelings on this subject. It may drive you crazy that she says she just doesn't feel “sexy” some nights even though you can't look at her without being turned on. And you may not understand how he can come home after “ignoring” you all day and feel like it's high time for some passionate sex.

Men are different than women, particularly with regards to our motivations for sexual intimacy. You cannot change that, but you need to be willing to work with this “insider” knowledge for the benefit of your marriage.

One issue that is sure to arise during this conversation is the idea of **control**. For years, my wife would dictate the time, place and frequency of our sexual relationship, and this tendency to control the sexual aspect of a marriage is pretty typical for women.

Likewise, you may find that your husband tends to be **irresponsible** when it comes to sex. He may put all of the family planning responsibilities on your shoulders and not do his part to ensure that the environment (physically and emotionally) is prepared for your intimate time together. Again, I have been guilty of this in our marriage.

We are going to address these issues more in the days to come, but for now you should simply be aware that these are major constraints in many marriages. You're not alone if you find you struggle at times with the issues of control and irresponsibility in your relationship, and particularly in your sex life.

Today's Tips

- ✓ Again, this is a sensitive topic and you need to be careful not to fall into the trap of using your *Couple Time* today to point blame at each other. This is your time to learn more about your spouse and improve the intimacy in your marriage.
- ✓ While your spouse isn't likely to change based on a single 15-minute conversation, you can certainly take this opportunity to shift your own perspective.
- ✓ Next time he initiates sex, think about what it means to him before you immediately throw up your Stop sign. Consider how close she feels to you at the end of the day, and work at closing any perceived gaps in your daily intimacy.

About the Author

My name is Dustin, and I'm basically just a normal guy with a passion for marriage, family and life. I am an engineer by trade, and I try to be a good husband to Bethany and a mostly patient Dad to our three great kids.

My wife and I have been blessed to spend more than five years helping young couples through marriage preparation workshops and by facilitating marriage retreats through our church, and we never cease to be amazed by the energy we receive as a couple through this mission.

When I'm not at work, helping at church or hanging out with my family, you'll find me doing my best to provide practical advice for busy couples looking to get more from life at [Engaged Marriage](#). I'd love to hear from you on [Twitter](#) and over at our [Facebook page](#).

As if that's not enough, I also love sharing my passion for fitness to help busy couples get in shape and rock their marriages in the process over at [Fit Marriage](#) and through our podcast [The Fit Marriage Show](#). If you'd like to get fit in a way that fits your family's hectic schedule, please check out our [Thrive90 Fitness program](#), grab some [free training programs](#) or visit us on [Facebook](#).

Thank you once again for sharing these last 28 days with me. I'm truly honored to help you make the most of your marriage. I look forward to hearing from you.

