

An Excerpt from **Successful Second Marriages**

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Introduction

"I do." With these words, I turned for the new wife's kiss (first wife for Jim!) from my brand new husband, Jim. The minister turned us to face our guests, and loudly announced, "Welcome Jim and Pat Bubash." We faced the delighted faces of family and friends, special people we wanted at this celebration of our new life together as a married couple. Everyone was clapping and congratulating us.

I skirted around chairs, receiving hugs and congratulations as I made my way over to my parents. As I leaned over to embrace my mother and give her a kiss, my dad interrupted by saying to me, "I just want to ask you to do something for me?"

I turned to him expecting something like, "Be happy," or "We wish you happiness." What he said was so unexpected, so unsolicited, and yes, so hurtful. "Would you, please, do me a favor?" he repeated. Without hesitation, I nodded yes, and he added, "Please make this one the last!" I almost gasped aloud. I was so stunned by his request on this my joyous occasion.

What my dad did not know was how very close I had come to not walking down any aisle, every again, unless it was a grocery aisle. As a matter of fact, I made sure there wasn't an aisle where we were married.

My History

As much as I loved Jim, "my hero", I had hedged on getting married. You see, this was not a second time for me, but a third. Second-time marriages have a high rate of divorce, and third is an even bigger increase for failure. It seems the ante gets higher with each "I do." So when Jim stated after almost two years of dating, "It is time to get married." I was put in turmoil. Not wanting to lose him, but justifiably, gun shy, I did not immediately, enthusiastically say, "Yes!" I knew the "stuff" erupting from the failure of a marriage, emotional, financial, even physical stuff as a result of the anger, hurt,

disappointment, and loss of an expected forever life together, married. Therefore, Jim's ultimatum, we marry or go our separate ways, did not make me an ecstatic bride-to-be.

The Right One (couple number two)

As we entered into the question of what made you know this was the person you wanted to "try with again," Geoff's face and tone took on a serious contemplation. He said, "After my divorce, I concluded two things I wanted if I married again. First, I wanted to see if out there in the world, there was a happy marriage. If a successful marriage was possible, if you could have a partner who loved and respected you. Second, I did not want to start dating a lot of people. I wanted to find someone without going through a lot of dating. If this all did not work out, ok, but if it did, that was wonderful!"

Fully Committed (couple number 6)

As we continued on with our conversation, Paula in a less mischievous manner expressed her pleasure in Steve's absolute acceptance of her. "Remember, I had dated a lot and not always making good choices in the people that I dated. Steve was able to accept me for who I was, and the things I had done that were not so good."

Steve in a very non-judging manner added to Paula's comments. "She had lived a very active lifestyle, maybe even on the verge of being a little bit wild. She would tell me about these times, and none of it mattered to me. Whatever she had done in the past is her past. What had happened in her life brought her to this point - who she is now. I told her, "I do not care about your past. All I care about is now, and accepting each other as we are with each other, now."

The Deciding Factor (couple number 7)

The ease with which Randy meshed with Hazel's son was the deciding factor in Randy's favor. Hazel was impressed the first time Randy came to visit. He sat on the floor and started playing video games with her son. Tom (her son) and Randy watched sports together, and Randy actually interacted with the boy. There had been so little interaction between Tom and his real dad. So to see a man who acted like a dad was an immediate win for Randy in Hazel's eyes.

Blending Families

Once they were married, Randy's two children came and stayed with them every other weekend. And most of the summer his children spent at their house. Finances were sometimes tight. They were renting a small house when all the children were coming and going. "It was really crowded. Neither the lack of money or cramped quarters mattered, we were all enjoying being together. We had three bedrooms, one bathroom, and one closet! Did I say it was crowded?" Hazel went on with her description, " The kids never seemed to mind. We had fun together. We lived there for a few years, and then bought this house. Those were good times."