



simplify[®] your life

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»Costs are rising much too high. One of you has to be outsourced.«



Sort out your workplace

How your desk becomes your personal motivational center

Desks, workbenches and office tables of any kind tend to become cluttered. Like unwanted extensions or viruses in your PC, clutter slows down your personal biological operating system. To prevent serious damage in both your work efficiency and motivation, declutter all your horizontal surfaces from time to time. Here is how:

Do it when you don't have time for it



Incidentally, if you think you don't have time to tidy up your desk because you have too much to do, you should do it now! Even if it takes two or three hours (it rarely takes longer: people usually overestimate the time needed), the time invested will be worth it, because afterwards you will have a clear mind.

someone)? If yes, throw away. When I store this item, is there a place for it I will remember when I need it? If you don't have a sure answer, throw away or invent a good new place for it *now*.

Install a pre-waste paper basket

Ideally, you should put a large container there. Throw away paper by putting them flat in that container. So if you need something back, there is a good chance to find it because your waste paper basket is in chronological order. To empty the basket, throw away the lower half of its content. In most cases, you don't want things back that

On your working surface there should be only things that you use more than once a day. All other stuff goes straight into drawers or on spaces behind or besides of you. This is especially useful for your to-do-piles. Never put them in front of you. To look at them all day long demotivates you!

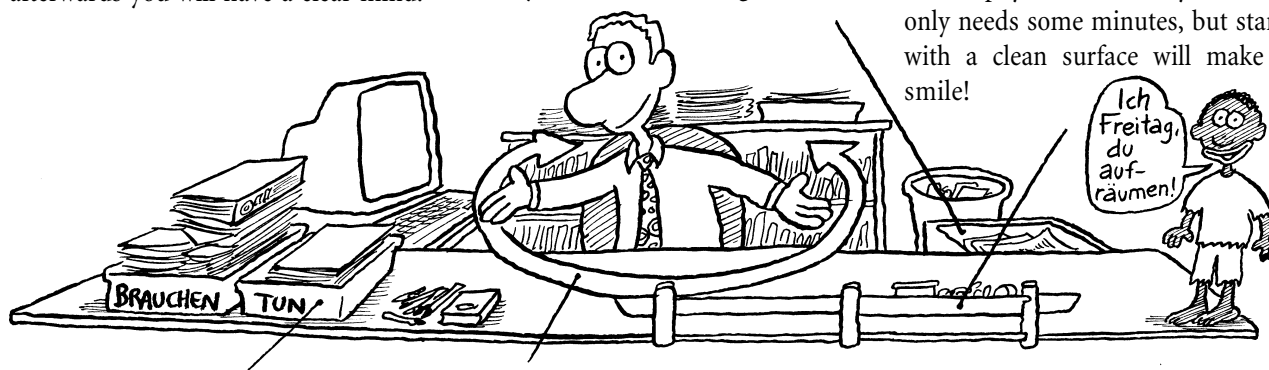


Use third dimension

If you don't have space behind or besides of you, buy a rack system at an office supply store that allows you using the space over the normal work desk level.

Make it a ritual

The only way to have a friendly, motivational desk is to do inspections on a regular basis. Make it a ritual to clean up your desk every evening. It only needs some minutes, but starting with a clean surface will make you smile!



You'll feel better and more motivated and you'll soon make up for the "lost" time.

Divide and conquer

Sort into two categories:

1. *To do*. This category contains everything you have to do yourself soon. With each item of paperwork you put into this area, be clear about what the next step will be. Be really tough with this stack of things.

2. *Needed*. Take every single item in your hand and ask yourself these questions: Will I ever really need this again? If no, throw away. Is there any other way to access the information of this sheet of paper other than keeping it (online, ask a colleague, call

are thrown away longer than 7 days ago.

Here is a list of unnecessary paper items, which should give you ideas for more things to throw away: Old travel brochures, newspapers over one week old, catalogues over six months old, magazines without any articles you need in the long term, instructions for appliances you no longer have, warranties that have expired. You'll be amazed how much stuff is past its "expiration date"!

Don't waste desk space



See your desk like a valuable 1A-space in an urban pedestrian shopping zone.

Make a bigger makeover about every week, e. g. every Friday. In the picture above, Robinson Crusoes helper Friday reminds his master: "Me Friday, you declutter!"

simplify-checklist

- time limit _____ minutes
- throw away as much as possible
- big container
- use space besides and behind desk
- only daily used items on desk
- next makeover every _____

Decluttering techniques that work

How to get rid of unwanted things



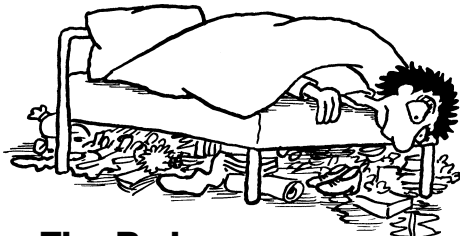
Throwing away with Undo

About 80 percent of any collected items never will be in use again. Store things that have been unused for one year or more in a big box. Put that box in the attic or garage, clearly marked with the packing date. If you never miss its content for another year, you can give the box away as a whole.



The odds-and-ends-drawer

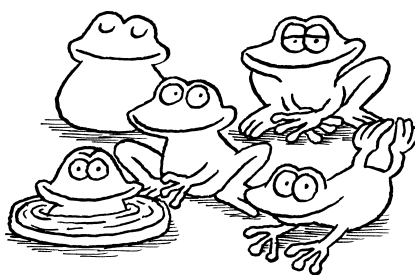
Reserve at least one drawer in every room for “junk”. This is where you put everything that doesn't fit into any category. But don't pick a too large drawer for it; use it sparingly and clear it out regularly. After three months, you will be able to throw away most of those odds and ends with a clean conscience because it turns out that nobody needs them anymore.



The Bedroom: Your Intimacy

Traditionally, the bedroom is the place in a house that is taboo for guests. That is why it is frequently misused as a storage room for everything that would be a nuisance anywhere else. And yet it's in that room where you spend the night that you need harmony and order. Get rid of the classic sources of

negative emotion: dirty laundry, boxes with old things, broken objects. Don't store anything under the bed except perhaps bed linens and blankets. Take a look through drawers as well. Nobody needs 40 pairs of socks or 15 old-fashioned pullovers. A neat bedroom will allow you deeper sleep and often a more intensive love life.



There's Collection ... and Then There's Collecting

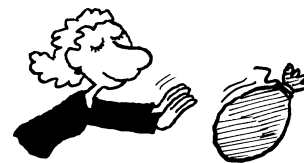
Everyone collects things: phone cards, books, matchboxes, small coffee cups, stuffed animals, elephants, stamps. It starts with a small display of a certain type of thing on a shelf and ends up spreading throughout the whole house: wallpaper, tablecloths, pictures, placemats, napkins, crockery, and even the collector's are decorates with small frogs, bears, cows, or whatever. Behind this is an ancient human need to identify with something. It's often animals, as with the Native American totems. Collections bring a system into the unmanageable number of things that the world offers us.

Take a critical look at the type of things you collect. When did you start? What could be behind your collection? Do you still have the need that you had when you started? Or does your collection bind you to the past? If it does, give it up. Normally, it's easier to give up a model railway or cup collections completely than to just reduce them. If there is anyone to whom you could give or sell your hobbies (and who would enjoy them), then do it! It will really simplify your life and free you up for new things.



Give things away while you're still alive

The most popular method of getting rid of things is to leave it up to descendants. But the descendants find that nobody wants 95 percent of the treasured things even when they try to give them away. If you haven't yet gone through this experience yourself, let people who have tell you about this. The better solution: Go through your home and gather up all of the things that you're keeping for people. Then give or send these things to the people (but first ask whether they want them!) Giving things away while you're still alive is one of the most worthwhile ways of getting rid of ballast.

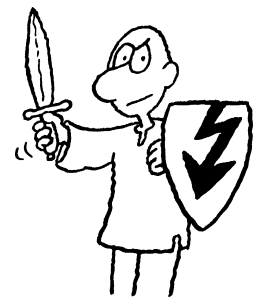
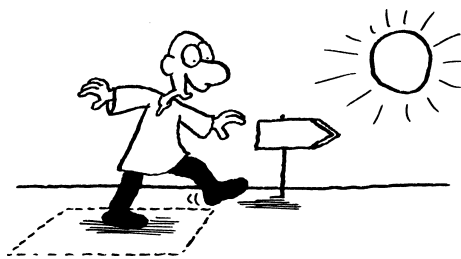


simplify instantly

If you store some items for your descendants, then give it to them – now. Grandfather's watch, Grandma's silver tea pot, to be passed on to your son and daughter: Hand it to them, tell them everything you know about the former owners. Remember Groucho Marx' line: “Why should I do something good for the the afterworld? What did the afterworld do good for me?”

The prayer of Jabez

The little book “The Prayer of Jabez” by US author *Bruce Wilkinson* sold over 9 million copies. Many people reported that it dramatically changed their lives.



Keep misery and pain away from me

Not only in Christian context, to be able to suffer and to stand pain is seen as a virtue. But in his famous prayer “Our father” Jesus does not say “Make us strong in standing pain” but “Make us free from evil.” Simplifying his life means to acknowledge that there is pain in misery in this world. But it does nothing good both for you and the world if you sacrifice yourself and suffer. Remember that if you are amidst a crisis: So bad the bad news may be, it always pays to fight.

A man called pain



Amidst boring genealogical lists in the First Book of Chronicles in the bible, there is this remark (chapter 4, verses 9 and 10):

Now Jabez was more honourable than his brethren. And his mother called his name Jabez because she said: I was in sorrow when I brought him to life. And Jabez cried out to the God of Israel: Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let your hands be with me, and keep me from harm and pain. And God granted his request.

Jabez means “pain”, and in Jewish thinking, every name has a meaning and affects life. A man with a negative name carries a big burden. But Jabez found a way to overcome this very burden by praying to God. He did that so intensely that the four parts of this prayer were integrated into his name on the descendants list.

Enlarge my territory

For old Jabez, being a shepherd like many Old Testament people, an enlarged territory meant having more cattle and more food for them to eat. But more than this, to widen the space means finding new horizons, overcoming borders, widen your own possibilities. By praying “enlarge my territory”, new people will come into your life, new chances come in sight. You feel the joy of learning new knowledge, widen your view, keep being curious.



Let your hands be with me

If you overcome borders, you are leaving the comfort zone. You are entering the world of adventure and thrill, of bliss and bliss. When stepping into new spaces, sometimes it feels as if blessings turn into heavy loads. Therefore, Jabez’ third sentence is important: Find help, stretch out your empty hands saying: “I can’t do it on my own! I don’t want to become big and famous. Please, become big and famous inside of me!”

And God granted his request



Many people made the „Prayer of Jabez“ part of their life. They put it on the bathroom mirror to read it in the morning. They say it in the small and big crisis moments in life. They count on it because a prayer has more to do with the sender than with recipient. Therefore, there is prayer in every religion, and even unreligious people do it to lighten up their days.

Bless me



We learned that it is good not to begin with myself. If you need to be blessed, other people should receive blessings first. But you can read it in the biographies of many great religious men and women: They all had the courage to ask to be blessed. “Bless me” not simply means “Give what I want” but indicates that you are open for the way help will come to you. Jesus more than once said: “Ask and you will receive” (Matthew 7, 7).

The Prayer of Jabez

*Bless me
and enlarge my territory.
Let your hands be with me,
and keep me from harm
and pain.*

The simplify-diary of happiness

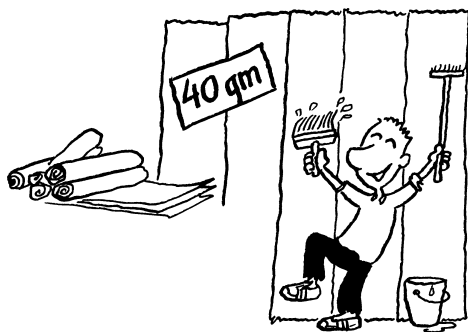
An efficient method to feel more joy at work

“What a day! *Nothing* accomplished!” Do you sigh like this some evening? This not only makes you feel unhappy, but after a longer period of time it literally makes you sick. Many kinds of backache, headache, immune deficiency and other diseases come from the permanent feeling of being incontent. But you can do something about it.



Write it down

It is a fundamental difference if you just think inside your brain or bring it down to paper. Written thoughts have the feedback effect: What you wrote down, has left your head and now stands in front of you, building kind of objective truth. You trust yourself more when you read what you wrote. In many cases, handwriting is a bit more efficient than typing on the computer keyboard.



Use absolute numbers

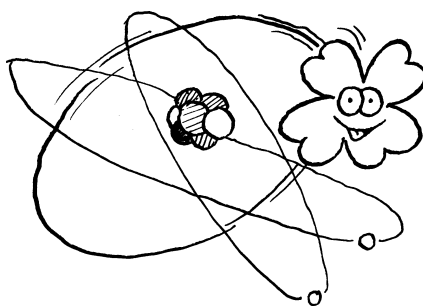
Do not measure your workday in relative facts and figures. When you succeeded to finish 40 square meters of wallpaper but planned to finish 160, then do not write down “25 percent” but “40 square meters”. If you read 10 pages in a book instead of 100 you had wished to do, then don't worry about the 90 unread ones but enjoy the 10! The simplify-diary finally ends all the wrong unhappiness, the “felt misery” of

men who would have enough reason to be grateful and filled with a good self-respect.



Be your own measure

If you are afraid of calling unknown people, then a single call is a great success for you. Don't look at yourself through your boss' eyes (who finds it ridiculous that you can't call 20 foreigners a day) or from your parents' point of view (who always made fun of your telephone fear). The simplify-diary brings back the measurement that really counts – for you.



Identify your atoms of happiness

Success is made of many mini-steps. The simplify-diary sharpens your skill of self-reception. After a few days you will be surprised how happy you can become from having written a single good e-mail-message. Or from a small walk in the park, a decluttered drawer or an amaretto-flavoured latte macchiato.



Name your diary

It's always a good idea to give new manners a name. Call your simplify-diary “success journal” or “red leatherette” (because it is bound in cherry suede). Make your diary your personal treasure chest, your favourite weapon to fight the blues.



Anchor it in your daily schedule

The biggest problem of your simplify-diary: You will often forget it. It is a good idea to give it a fixed time and place. Lay it down besides your computer, put it inside your car or on your bedside table.

If you are riding a dead horse ...

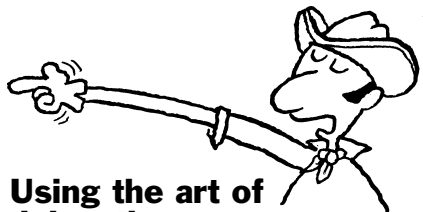
... the best strategy is to dismount

Businesses, however, often try other strategies. Here are some of them.



Using brute power

1. Buying a stronger whip.
2. Declaring that "No horse is too dead to beat."
3. Increasing the standards to ride dead horses.
4. Revisit the performance requirements for horses



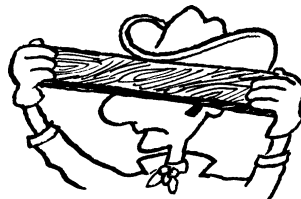
Using the art of delegation

5. Changing riders.
6. Hire contractors to ride the dead horse.
7. Promote the dead horse to a supervisory position.
8. Purchase a product to make dead horses run faster.
9. Appointing a committee to study the horse.
10. Appointing a tiger team to revive the dead horse.
11. Renaming the horse.



Finding fixes

12. Creating a training session to increase our riding ability.
13. Arranging to visit other sites to see how they ride dead horses.
14. Harnessing several dead horses together for increased speed.
15. Do a CA Study to see if contractors can ride it cheaper.
16. Providing additional funding to increase the horse's performance.
17. Form a quality circle to find uses for dead horses.



Mental solutions

18. Comparing different dead horses.
19. Change the requirements declaring that "This horse is not dead".
20. Make a counter-study to prove the horse is alive.
21. Creating a fancy PowerPoint presentation about the horses abilities when it was still alive.
22. Declare the horse is now "better, faster and cheaper."
23. Find out who else is riding a dead horse and declare it a new standard.
24. Saying things like "This is the way we always have ridden"

Breathing your fears away

How breathing exercises can change your life

Many people suffer from fears: very specific ones (of flying, of spiders, of speaking in front of an audience), less definite ones (of lack of money, of not being loved) or extremely vague worries, that can be seen only as bodily symptoms (headaches, chronic tiredness). The American therapist couple *Kathlyn* and *Gay Hendricks* have been working with patients suffering from fears for many years. Different ways of breathing have proven to be most effective. So they summarised them into an effective healing method.

Fear means: no power

Every kind of fear takes room and power away from you. The German word "Angst" comes from "Enge", narrowness. When you are in angst, your body reacts defensively, slows down breathing ("holds his breath") – and makes your inner constriction even more constricted. The solution: Make yourself, widen your chest, fight narrowness actively.

for years! Enjoy every single breath like expensive delicatessen.

You can improve your lungs' strength by holding your breath when fully inhaled and then repeatedly bumping the belly outward with joy and power.

Take breath-breaks

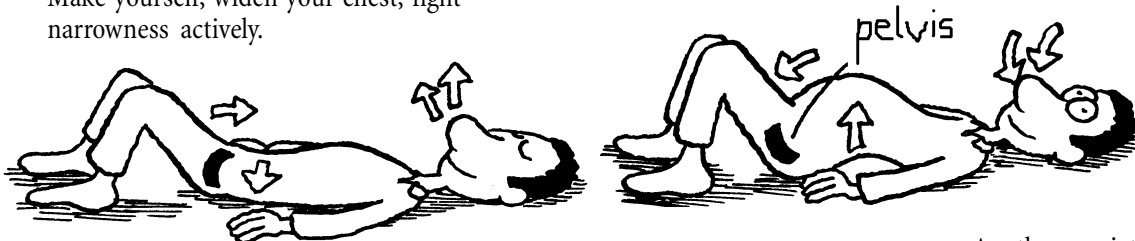
You can do this kind of breathing also when standing or sitting on the edge of a chair. When inhaling, lift off your head, enjoying the power flowing into your body.

Feel fear-free seconds

Listen into yourself: When you stop breathing after having deeply inhaled and exhaled, it is nearly impossible to feel fear. Some people feel the maximum of fearlessness at the other end (when fully inhaled). In either case, people experience the miracle that fear is not a fact but a certain body status which can be switched off and on.



If you suffer from fear of losing money, imagine yourself sitting on a huge treasure chest when inhaling and exhaling. With every breath you get richer and safer. Sounds funny, but has an immediate effect.



Breathing as a stimulant

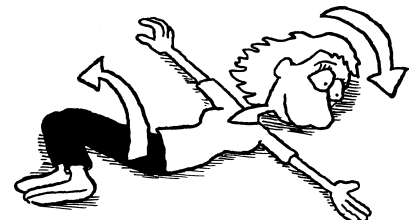
Lay down on a carpet (a bed would be too soft). Lay on your back, arms loosely beside you, feet slightly opened flat on the floor, knees up. Exhale completely by tilting your pelvis towards belly button. Press your spine on the floor, your belly deflates and presses out the last remaining air. Stay so for 10 to 20 seconds, then follow the natural impulse to inhale.

To inhale, tilt the pelvis towards the floor. Your small of the back lifts off. Don't be shy to inflate your belly and feel it expand into all directions. Now your lungs fill up completely with air. You are activating parts of your lungs that sometimes had been without air

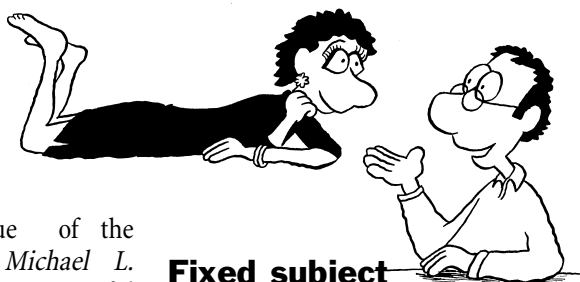
Breathing with pictures

When you have problems to assert your authority (fear in front of an audience or your spouse), then imagine you get an inch bigger with every single deep breath you take. You can feel the result immediately! After 3 minutes of conscious deep breathing your personal authority status has increased. Trust your inner feeling, don't doubt about it, and enjoy the other peoples reactions: You are bigger, stronger and more courageous!

Another variation can strengthen your immune system: When doing the breathing exercise on the floor, tilt your head and knees sideward in opposite directions. This widens your inner spaces, allowing your inner energy to flow even better.



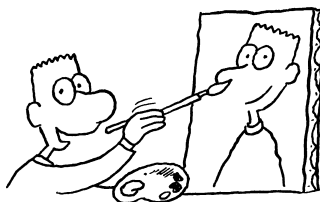
Why dialogues have such a good effect



The „dialogue“ technique of the German psychoanalyst *Michael L. Moeller* has proved successful thousands of times with his clients. It consists of a conversation in which you apply some simple but fixed rules. Both partners commit to follow the rules.

Fixed subject

Each person talks about the things that are really issue for him or her at the moment. Moeller talks about it in terms of painting a self-portrait. Each



person focuses only on *himself* or *herself*. If you speak about the other person (which is allowed, of course), it should not be in a judgmental way; instead you talk about *your own* feelings in relation to your partner. That is the difference between dialogues and quarrels in “relationship boxes”, in which each person tries to make the *other one* see what he or she is really like.

The Effect of Dialogues

Psychosomatic research has revealed that the human immune system is significantly affected by the quality of couple relationships. Blood counts improve measurable after a dialogue.

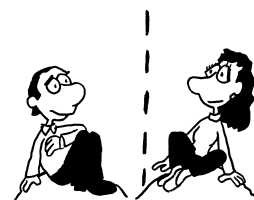
A person’s subjective **feeling of happiness** is likewise heavily dependent on the couple relationship.

A good partnership also has a big influence on the couple’s **children**. In later life, each child will unconsciously emulate the qualities shown by his or her parents toward each other.

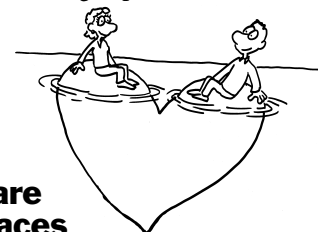
After a while, the improved communication resulting from the dialogue will also enhance the couple’s **sex life**. It is a mistake to think that good sex is only possible through a feeling of strangeness (a popular argument to justify escapades on the side). Mutual understanding and intimacy are the best ingredients for fulfilled eroticism.

In dialogues both partners learn the following great truths:

“I am not you”



You learn that you both know each other much less than you thought. In a long-standing relationship, one partner is always claiming something in relation to the other one. Moeller talks about this in terms of “colonizing the other” or “coupleracism”: each person is secretly convinced that he or she is somehow the better of the two. An honest dialogue puts an end to this.



“We are two faces of one relationship”

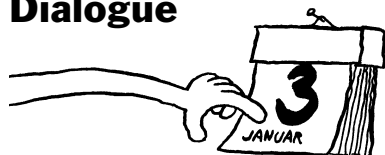
At the same time, you learn not to consider yourselves as two independent individuals but as a couple that has been growing together for a long time on the subconscious level. The nature of love is such that it involves the soul. Even your partner’s worst qualities belong to both of you. For example, if your partner keeps a secret from you because he or she is ashamed of something, it is not “his or her guilt” alone, since in relation to someone else he or she might not feel ashamed of it.



When a dialogue goes wrong

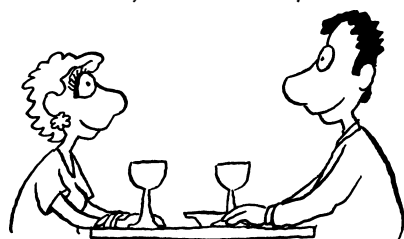
Don’t give up if your dialogues do not work in the beginning. Have faith: dialogues optimize themselves. If a dialogue turns out awful, the next one will automatically be better. Dialogues have an effect that goes beyond; as a result, other discussions will also become more substantial and more open.

The rules of Dialogue



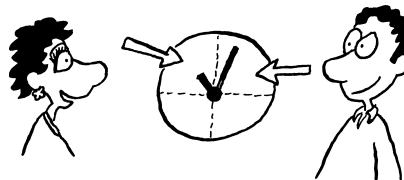
Fixed time

Agree on a time each week and an alternate time (in case anything comes up at the regular time) when you can talk to each other undisturbed for 90 minutes – “just the two of you alone”.



Fixed procedure

Sit opposite each other, because the important things are conveyed visually rather than words. Block out any disturbance (telephone, computer, background music, television). Do not shorten or extend the conversation.



Fixed exchange

You need an hour for dialogues. One person speaks for 15. minutes and then the other speaks for the same length of time. The person who listens does not ask any questions, not even to understand.

The Kingdom of Love

No matter if you are single or married: People are longing for a stable and happy relationship. Which is becoming more and more difficult. It seems as if you have to be Superman or Supergirl to succeed in long lasting love. But perhaps there are some simple truths about love and marriage we have forgotten?

First simple truth: Love is not a situation or status (with a booming beginning, and then it declines), but a journey. A quest with several typical states.

The Tower

This is where it all begins: in the tower of yourself. It is a symbol for your unique personality. On the outside there are strong and handsome walls. In the innermost center the tower hides a secret chamber. This is the place where your soul lives which longs for another, matching soul to unite with. This place holds the key for the happiness of your love in the future.

The Farm

This is the place where a couple comes back into life and society. Where the two build up something that can be seen and can give them shelter. Here they rise children or do other projects that are bigger than their own lives. In a good partnership, a couple is not only connected by work (with the questions of who earns the money, who cares for the home, who shares time with whom etc.) but by other areas of life. We call it the five fields of love-farming:

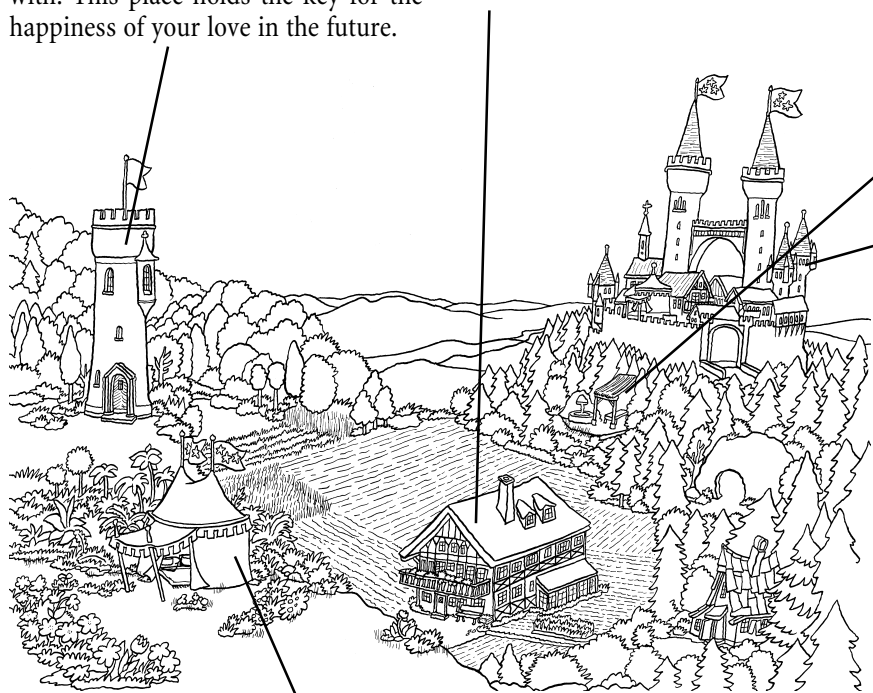
1. The wheat field (money, time, things)
2. The trees of knowledge (information, learning, wisdom)
3. The flower garden (emotions, music, art, culture)
4. The potato field (soulwork, dreams, the unconscious)
5. The vineyard (religion, spirituality, afterlife)

If a couple shares the fruits of at least three fields, their risk of separating or living unhappily together is minimized.

The Dark Forest

The farm is surrounded by dark, dangerous woods. One or both of them can get lost there easily. There is the witch's house where the man sees his wife no longer as a lovely companion but as a terrifying witch. She contaminates the home's atmosphere and nags about everything. The other building is the robber's cave. Here the woman feels as if her life has been stolen by a hideous, selfish predator. He is achieving his goals, living his life in freedom, but she is doomed to stay at home with kids and kitchen and clean the bandit's cave. In the forest, love turns upside down. Before, all the treasures and richness in your life seemed to come from your loving partner. Now you are sure that all bad feelings and discomfort is but the guilt of your significant other.

Fortunately, there is a third location hidden in the deep dark forest. We call it the hermitage. Here you can find the loophole out of the dark. The hermit or the wise old woman is a function of your inner self. It stands for the soul's ability to locate itself in the maze of life. Parting or divorce is not the only way out of the Dark Forest. There is a path to another vision for a loving couple (even if the intensity of love has declined over the years).



The Castle

At the end, a great reward for both of you is waiting. The King's and Queen's castle stands for a higher level of love and partnership. As you can see, there are two towers. In the mature partnership, every single partner has more room for himself as he or she had in the farm. Each one can be sure of the other one's love, which is shown by the steep bridge connecting the tall towers. From here, a couple can overlook the landscape. The mature partnership exceeds the cosy togetherness of two individuals and widens to a broader view on society and nature. Like king and queen, a couple is relevant for a nations (or worlds) pursuit of happiness. The two had not to build up the castle on themselves. They found it ready. In the castle, a couple experiences new dimensions of felicity and serendipity in a somewhat timeless way.

The Tent of Love

Here the lovers meet, united and forget about the world around them. At the same time, they unite with the universe and feel the sheer joy of love, sex and erotic experience. This is the most popular place in the Land of Love. Even more: For many people, this is the only known spot to them. Magazines are talking about sex, websites are promising erotic adventures, but they all forget: This tent is a great place to be, but it is not designed for a whole lifetime. After a beautiful period of bliss, in every partnership there is a need to move into something that stays.

