

# Relationship Advice: 3 Ways to Handle Unmet Expectations in Marriage



By Jennifer Smith

I unintentionally entered marriage with a heart full of expectation of how life would be once I became a wife. I desired a perfect relationship and love, free of hardship and pain, and full of adventure and passion.

**Once we were finally married, I was blindsided by the circumstances we**

**encountered and the conflict that arose in my relationship with my husband. With each passing day, if my husband fell short of fulfilling one of my expectations, discontentment would grow in my heart.**

At the climax of our marital issues, when we both thought the next decision in our relationship would be divorce, God saved us! Among many things, God opened my eyes to the destruction of unmet expectations and how I had allowed them to cripple intimacy in our marriage.

I want to provide three ways to handle unmet expectations in marriage based on my experience:

**1. Joy:** We must cling to joy! Despite our circumstances or conflicts faced in marriage, we must understand that joy is more powerful and more necessary than happiness. If we pursue personal happiness we will never feel fulfilled, but if we pursue joy we find contentment!

**Related Link:** [Relationship Advice: How to Keep the Spark in Your Relationship After Valentine's Day](#)

**2. Contentment:** This is the ability to be satisfied no matter what! It's important because there are many things we can complain about in life. However, if we are able to be content with what we have, including our spouses, than there will be no room in our hearts for bitterness to grow!

**Related Link:** [Divorce Attorney Jacqueline Newman Offers Relationship Advice: "You Want to Be Divorcing a Happier](#)

## Spouse”

**3. Thankfulness:** This is the seed that leads to contentment, which leads to pure joy. We must be intentional everyday to find things in life and in marriage for which we are thankful.

I hope my love advice encourages you today and inspires you to let go of your unmet expectations in marriage. I challenge you to embrace joy, contentment, and thankfulness. When I challenged myself with this task, my heart as a wife was transformed, and my marriage was saved!

*Jennifer Smith created Unveiled Wife, a web-based ministry for wives, in March 2011, where she publishes weekly marriage articles and encouragements all geared toward empowering and discipling wives. She shares more of her story in her new book, The Unveiled Wife. Jennifer and her husband currently live in central Oregon with their young son.*