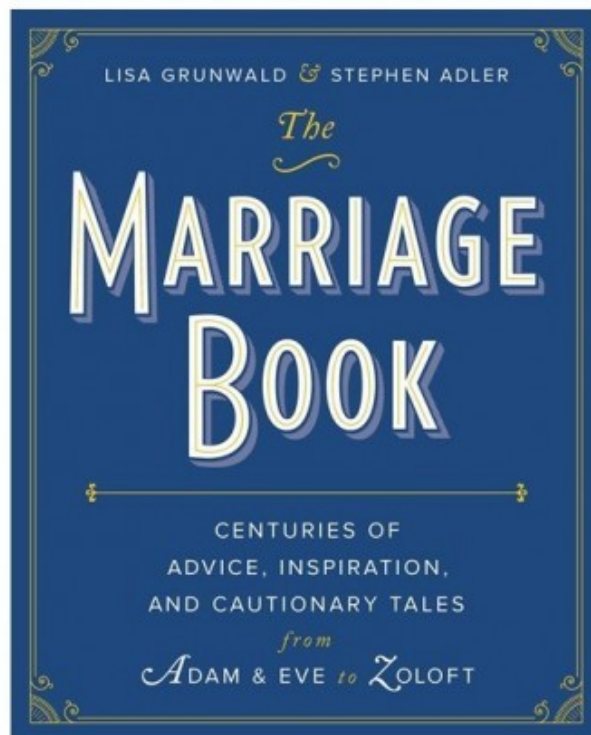


'The Marriage Book' Author Lisa Grunwald Discusses Relationships and Love: "We Are At Our Best When We're Bringing Out the Best in Each Other"



By [Rebecca White](#)

In Lisa Grunwald and Stephen Adler's newest [book about love](#), titled *The Marriage Book*, the married couple explores the institution of marriage spanning centuries and cultures, sources and genres. Readers will discover expert love advice

that can help them navigate their relationship and love life, especially in regards to getting married and starting a family. The compilation of illustrations, poems, songs, snippets of classic novels like *Pride and Prejudice* and *Gone with the Wind*, and even one liners from single celebrities or married celebrity couples will surprise readers and provide them with little nuggets of wisdom. In our exclusive author interview with Grunwald, we uncovered how relationships and love have changed over the centuries and how to use this evolution to benefit your own romance.

Lisa Grunwald Talks About Relationships and Love Through the Centuries

How have relationships changed over the centuries? How have they stayed the same?

It's so incredibly moving that circumstances change, but emotions don't. Love is love; sex is sex; anger is anger; and hope is hope. You'll find all of those things in marriages going back centuries. One of Stephen's all-time favorite entries is a eulogy written in 1 BC by a Roman husband with an unknown name, who was really wealthy for the time. What's surprising about it is that, when we thought marriage was about political arrangement or social arrangement, here was this man speaking in the most romantic way about this woman who had stood by him for 40 years. He was still clearly in love. That was amazing to us to find that kind of romance during a time when you would think things were a little more formal!

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What was the most interesting thing you learned about your own

marriage through your research?

Stephen and I met 28 years ago on a blind date, and we got engaged four months later. There was one moment when we asked each other, "What do you really want from life? What's your goal, leaving aside marriage and family? Is it money, power, privilege? What are you after?" We each told the other one, "That's our job. We're going to bring out the best in each other, even when the other one forgets what that is. We're going to keep the other person true to the original goal."

When we were doing the book, we had a lot of challenges, mostly because of my health. We found this marvelous quote from this man named Tim Newmann, who wrote a book in 1928 called *Modern Youth in Marriage*: "There are no full grown perfect beings. Sooner or later, the frailties are recognized. There is in most people a better self, which the fallible self hides. The greatest privilege of the married life is to be the one who assists the other more and more to do justice to that better possibility."

Doing this book reminded us that that's our job to each other. For us, it's always been that we're the keepers of each other's better self. There was a renewed commitment to doing it that way and being together. For us, the "us" is the way we approach marriage, and this book reminded us of that. We are at our best when we're bringing out the best in each other.

Relationship Author Shares Expert Love Advice

What tips do you have for longtime couples who are struggling to keep the spark alive?

Not to make light of sex – because sex is really important – but friendship, we think, is probably the most important. If you really like each other, *that's* going to get you through so

many of the ups and downs of the rest of your life. You have all these distractions, and at the end of the day, you're not always going to be able to make love to one another, but you're always going to be able to talk to each other.

You also have to believe that it's going to last. There are so many moments in a marriage where you can walk away. If you really believe that you're going to be married for the rest of your life, I think it really helps.

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What do you have to say to someone who is engaged and experiencing cold feet before their big day?

Try to imagine that it's ten years from now and that, inevitably, the spark from falling in love has altered to love. They're two different things. Can you imagine being without him or her? If you really can't imagine being without someone, that comes from a position of strength and excitement and enthusiasm. Of course, you're going to get cold feet. It's scary! I can't imagine doing it without some sort of trepidation. You have to recognize that it's a leap of faith, no matter when it takes place. You can't ever be completely sure.

For me and Stephen, we cannot believe that we got married. We didn't have a clue what we would face or how we would grow and change. We didn't know what was going to be required of or granted to us. There's no way that we could have known what the future was going to hold. But we did believe in the marriage. "Failure is not an option" is not a bad thing to live by. Trust your gut, not your feet.

How can a couple know when they're ready to start a family?

It just became a biological necessity. It was particularly easy for us to know: I told Stephen that I didn't want to be a

mother, and somehow, he nodded and said okay, even though he knew he wanted to have a family. Three years later, we're in Paris on a vacation, and I turn to him and say I really want to have a kid. I don't know the answer. Just the cliché that you'll know. When you do, it's a pretty strong drive, and you just kind of have to follow it.

And what is the best piece of love advice you've ever been given?

Do justice to that better self. Don't ever let your lover get bored. That message comes through in the book. Don't take each other for granted. Don't let boredom settle in. For love to grow, you have to keep remembering that that person was someone you once put on your absolute best suit for and someone you shaved your legs for. If you let it get to routine, it can slip into being something that's not really love or marriage but more like a working relationship. It's fun to make an effort because you're not going to get bored either!

You can purchase Lisa Grunwald and Stephen Adler's book The Marriage Book on Amazon now!