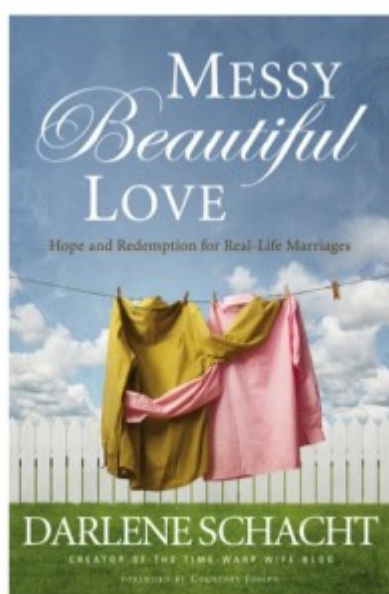


'Messy Beautiful Love' Author Darlene Schacht: "True Love Doesn't Happen By Accident"



By Shannon

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It's important to be prepared for the best and worst of what marriage has to offer. In her new memoir *Messy Beautiful Love: Hope and Redemption for Real-Life Marriages*, Darlene Schacht gets in depth about the trials that couples face in their marriage, including issues like financial struggles, sickness, aging parents, and a chronically unhappy husband. This book explores the idea that, no matter how strong the bond, the mess has to be dealt with at one point or another to keep the marriage alive. *Messy Beautiful Love* is an invitation to readers to open their hearts to the possibility of a strong and healthy marriage with proper communication and team work.

When people get married, there are certain expectations that each partner has of one another. Over time, these expectations change due to circumstance, and sometimes, people have issues adjusting. Why do you think it's important for people to go into marriage with an open mind?

I went into marriage with a long list of expectations of who my husband Michael should be and what our future should look like. Things took a different road when Michael started running his own company. I was home with four kids, and he worked long hours. Rather than exercising patience and kindness, I let bitterness creep in, and it grew over time to the point where it took over my thoughts.

The thing is that we all change. We grow up; we face hardships; we enjoy good times; and we mature from experience. Love is beautiful, but it can be messy when you're facing something you never expected.

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Why do you think your message is important for women especially?

I think that the message is important for men and women alike. My story stems from a place of grace, which is something we all need in our lives. Since I'm a woman, however, I can identify with other women in a way that I can't with men. I can't tell you the number of times that women have confided in me about the struggles they're facing online. It can mess with your mind when a seemingly perfect man (and I do mean seemingly) is paying attention to you or wanting to chat.

You write about humility being essential to a successful marriage. Why do you think several women struggle with giving that trust to their partners? And why is it that women have issues giving away their hearts fully?

I believe that we all want strong partners—people who are willing to stand up for themselves and do the right thing. Humility is often confused with weakness when in fact it's a sign of strength and confidence. It takes strength to admit that you're wrong. It also takes strength when we choose to *do* right instead of having to *be* right. When we are confident in ourselves, we aren't as concerned about fighting for a position of authority as we are about fighting together for love.

What do you believe is the largest contributor to today's increasing divorce rates?

People often say that they're unhappy because they've grown apart. I believe that couples will grow apart if they do not love each other daily and deliberately. True love doesn't happen by accident. It's deliberate; it's intentional; it's purposeful; and in the end, it's always worth it. Some days love is messy, and all we want to do is give up, but those who work through love together reap the benefits of beautiful long-lasting love.

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This book contains a lot of your deep and personal thoughts. When you're in love, do you believe it's harder to share these thoughts with the person you love, or do you think people shy away in fear of what their partner will think of them?

One of the most wonderful things about Michael is that I feel safe in his arms. I always have. He's a shelter that I know I can run to in the midst of a storm. I'm sure that, in the beginning, I was probably hesitant at times to share my deepest thoughts with him, but after 25 years, I'm comfortable enough to share anything. We've learned to communicate. But more importantly, we've practiced the art of communication by harnessing our emotions and listening well for the good of our

marriage.

Messy Beautiful Love: Hope and Redemption for Real-Life Marriage was released on September 16th. Readers can also find out more about Darlene Schacht by visiting her blog, <http://timewarpwife.com/>.