



# Marriage Saver Survival Kit

Pastor Joel L. Rissinger

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## **Forward:**



**My name is David and I'm a veteran Marine. Unfortunately, I treated my marriage like boot camp and, after years of struggle, a separation, and an affair, my wife and I were separated and it looked like things were over.**

**That is, until I met Pastor Joel.**

**I won't sugar-coat it. He was tough on me at times. But I could tell he really cared about me, my wife, and our family. Through lots of love, tough love, and patient care too—our marriage was restored. Now, ten years later, we are happy and truly blessed. I would recommend Pastor Joel's program to anyone in the same situation.**

**It may seem like its over—but believe me—it's not!**

**I wish you the same successful, blessed outcome Kerry and I experienced.**

**Sincerely,**

**David Townsend  
Veteran USMC**

**What you're holding in your hands is a summary of what I've been doing for the past 25 years and why I think it is critical for couples facing separation or even divorce.**

**Up until now, the information that I reveal in this report has been something you could only obtain through "luck" or in a one-on-one counseling session with someone like me. Frankly, the information I provide in this program would cost thousands of dollars and a lot of "trial and error"—mostly error.**

**So I urge you to print out this manifesto right now and read it immediately. Plus, there is a summary on page 12 that you'll want to post somewhere visible—seeing it daily can literally change your relationship life!**

## **WHO IS JOEL RISSINGER?**

**You might know me from the "Pondering" Radio Program & Podcast or as the author of the book, "The Crucified Couple." Some may have heard me speak at Iron Sharpens Iron Conferences or you may have seen my blog posts at [ChristianMarriageMentor.com](http://ChristianMarriageMentor.com)**

**I've also trained over 100 counselors in the use of Prepare-Enrich, a counseling system used by over 1,000,000 couples worldwide. My wife of 33 years, Karen, is also a School Psychologist and together, we've counseled and taught hundreds of couples how to have the kind of marriage we have...at least the kind we have today.**

**You see, we weren't always as happy as we are now.**

About 8 years into our marriage, I was a workaholic. I had been in IT Sales and HR Consulting, but recently made a major move into fulltime ministry as an Associate Pastor. Now, I literally had demands on my time 24/7 and I often left my wife and our two little kids to fend for themselves as I sought to “dispel the darkness” and serve my church.

I had no idea how unloved and miserable my wife had become.

Until one day, as I was leaving the house and I tossed a spoon on the counter while flying through the kitchen and out our side door.

Before I got to the door, Karen said to me, “I won’t be here when you get back.”

“Oh?” I said. “Are you going shopping?”

“No!” she said with a sad smirk, “I’m going to Canada. I’ve had enough...I’m taking the kids...I’m going home to live with my Mom and Dad.”

I literally was in shock. “She’s nuts,” I thought to myself. “Maybe she’s losing her mind. Or, maybe it’s ‘that time of the month’ and she’s just having an estrogen overload.” I was as clueless as anyone could ever be.

My marriage was in danger of ending and I didn’t even see it coming. Nor did I understand it once it hit me between the eyes.

What you’ll discover in reading this report is how I was able to turn my marriage into the kind of love story everyone wants to live. More importantly, you find out how I’ve helped dozens of others do the same....

# Can 17 Pages REALLY Save Your Marriage?

Let's be clear—the answer to that question is, “No!” But, what the next several pages CAN do is give you a blueprint for doing three things:

1. Stop the bleeding.
2. Show the love.
3. Start communicating.

For the past 25 years, I've worked with couples from the early stages of exclusive dating through and including couples who've filed for divorce but want help to “save” their marriage. You name it, I've seen it—ongoing affairs, abuse, “incompatibility,” etc., etc.

Not only have I counseled couples myself, I've also trained other counselors and clergy members to do the same. I've had the pleasure of working with my wife. She not only helps couples, but their children when they've been affected by an unhealthy marriage environment.

Here's what I've learned. I can help any of them if they want to grow closer or save a failing marriage. I can often help to a large degree if only ONE of them is initially cooperating and wanting to save the relationship. Do all of them turn-around? No, but many do! In fact, my track record is better than most therapists or clergy counselors.

Why?

Part of it is my own struggle and the lessons learned through it. Part of it is my years of ministry, coaching, and speaking experience. Maybe my graduate degrees or other education and certifications help. But truthfully, I also have some great

tools such as PrepareEnrich (see [www.prepare-enrich.com](http://www.prepare-enrich.com)) as well as Dr.

Neil

Anderson's "Steps to Freedom...." The biggest reason is that by God's grace, I understand the foundational key to a successful relationship.

**AND IT'S NOT WHAT MOST PEOPLE THINK!**

Two years ago, I published a book entitled, "The Marriage Saver."

In it, I describe how sacrifice is the foundation to a healthy relationship. Nobody wants to hear this, but I've proven in my own life and in the lives of hundreds of others, that it works every time it's tried!

I've also learned that even when a marriage "falls apart" and a divorce is filed, I can help each partner through it and, if I can't bring them back together, still help them prepare to move forward in life such that they don't experience this kind of failure again.

## **The "Spurned Spouse" Dilemma**

One of the saddest things I've witnessed over the years is what I call the "spurned spouse" dilemma. Normally, one partner gets

"fed-up" and says "I'm done." Often, the other partner feels blindsided and helpless in that their spouse is leaving or filing and seems unwilling to do anything to save the marriage.

I don't believe this is a hopeless situation.

**The key for me is to coach and encourage that “spurned spouse” to take some key steps that, quite often, can turn things around.**

**Why does this work?**

**Because nothing happens in a vacuum.**

## **Faith in the Fish Tank**

**Let’s say you own an aquarium. If you have a snail in that aquarium to help keep it clean and you remove the snail, EVERY living thing in that aquarium will be negatively affected.**

**Conversely, if we find the water is murky and we ADD a snail or clean the filter, every creature benefits. What’s interesting is that other than the snail, no other fish or plant in the aquarium was involved. They didn’t even know about the change and certainly had no part in it.**

**This means that even if only ONE partner is willing to change, the family environment can improve and, perhaps begin to heal. You need to have trust in this fact—literally “faith in the fish tank” of married life!**

**My job is to help you through this!**

## **What Do You Need to Turn This Ship Around?**

**I’m no ship’s captain or nautical engineer, but I love watching cruise ships docking. If you’ve ever been on a large cruise-liner, you’ll note that when they dock at port, they use forward**



**thrust/propulsion, reverse propulsion, and also propulsion jets on each side of the ship as well.**

**At least four components (plus deck hands, the rudder, etc.).**

**Well, in my experience, there are at least four things you'll need to successfully "dock" your marriage as well:**

- 1. Desire.**
- 2. Coaching.**
- 3. Knowledge.**
- 4. Perseverance.**

**Let's talk briefly about each of these.**

**If you don't REALLY want your marriage to work, I can't help you. You might think this sounds ridiculous, but I've encountered many people who basically want me to tell them to give up. They spew dozens of reasons why their marriage sucks and their partner is a clown, as if to say, "Hey PJ, can't you just give me permission to quit."**

**If that's what you want, I'm not your guy!**

**If you want to fix it and are committed to do whatever it takes, I can and will help you.**

**That's where coaching comes-in. I will get in your face and tell you when you're being a jerk. I will, like great coaches I had in college, encourage you, yell at you, and guide you to the next step.**

**I had a basketball coach like that my junior year in college. I had been a "sixth man" up to that point. I just wasn't quite**

**strong enough to be a starter. Coach Cheney saw me differently. He pushed me to become a starting—and even an all-star game performer.**

**I remember him getting tough with me and challenging me to be what he believed I could be. Once, I remember being shoved from behind during a game and spinning around to find out it was one of my own players. When I questioned him, he said, “Coach said to rough you up a bit because you play better when you’re mad.”**

**He just wouldn’t let me live below my potential.**

**Like Coach Cheney, I will never give up on you until your marriage is on the right track again or until you quit on me, whichever comes first. In fact, I may not even quit then in that I tell couples I marry or counsel that they can call on my anytime in the future. Many couples I’ve helped are like family now—I’m on their “favorites” list so-to-speak.**

**Then, there’s knowledge. You have to know the communication keys such as “I language,” or “reflective listening.” You’ll need to learn your partner’s love language and how to “speak” it. You’ve got to be trained in the steps to conflict resolution. As a person of faith, I believe you have to understand why God made marriage in the first place—otherwise, how can you truly experience it to its fullest?**

**There are things to learn and I will teach them to you—if you’re teachable.**

**Finally, there’s perseverance. I can’t create or teach you this, but I can encourage it and “pick you up when you’re down.” You’ll probably find that if you try to reach out and start doing good**

**and kind things to your partner—attempting to change the climate of your home—he/she will at first, attack you.**

**You'll expect joy or thanksgiving—you'll get rejection.**

**Why?**

**It's a natural defense mechanism for people to doubt the sincerity of someone they're mad at—even if that person makes positive changes. While subconscious, the offended spouse is going to attempt to shoot down the “trial balloon” of attempted change by insulting, accusing, or flat-out ignoring their partner. If the partner stops trying to do good things, the conclusion is, “I KNEW it wasn't real!”**

**This is why it's SO important to keep going. This is why I'll coach and cheer and pray and encourage you to never quit.**

**My experience is that most of those who endure—WIN. That is, their spouse turns-around, forgives, and seeks not only reconciliation, but rejuvenation!**

**I had a coach/friend who helped me when I went through this with Karen. I kept going even though her first reaction was anger, eyerolls, and worse. She said she thought I just wanted sex and that I wasn't sincere about changing things.**

**I had learned what her love language was and started to “feed” it despite her push-back. I was encouraged to keep going and so I did...going overboard in loving her even though she responded negatively.**

**Still, I'll never forget the day she grabbed me from behind and when I turned around, I saw she had tears in her eyes. "You really DO love me don't you?" she said, "You really DO! I'm sorry for being such a jerk to you."**

**Things have been awesome between us ever since!**

## **The Reason You Got Married**

**Picture the day you got engaged. Can you see it?**

**You were so in love. You both likely had stars in your eyes and perhaps a few tears too.**

**But what motivated you to "tie the knot?"**

**To one degree or another, you wanted someone to spend your life with. You probably wanted someone to start a family with. You wanted sex, intimacy, friendship, companionship, and a whole host of things.**

**And that's precisely the problem.**

**You wanted all this and believed your spouse would give it to you. He/she also wanted these things and believed you'd provide them as well. Both of you wanted to get...**

**But who was TRULY focused on giving?**

**I would argue that marriage has a divine purpose that supersedes all of this. I also believe that when we focus on giving, God blesses beyond what we might want from our spouse.**

**Finally, I believe that the true key to getting the relationship we want is to spend our time **GIVING** that to the person we love.**

**In a nutshell—that’s what I teach people to do...and the results can be literally life-changing!**

## **Stop the Pain, Rekindle the Flame!**

**I remember getting a call from Bill.**

**Bill was a big, “Duck-Dynasty” kind of guy. Long beard, scarylooking facial expression, big muscles, etc. He was a man of few if any words and frankly, I had been intimidated by him.**

**“It’s over, it’s over, it’s 00000---verrrrrr,” he cried. Actually, he was so emotional and animated, I didn’t even recognize his voice and had to ask twice to find out who was on the phone.**

**Once I calmed him down, Bill explained that he and his wife hadn’t spoken a word to each other in 3 months. He said she was having an affair and had asked for a divorce.**

**He was devastated and broken.**

**I worked with Bill and would summarize the coaching I gave him as “stop the pain, rekindle the flame.” I encouraged him to love her in specific ways—starting with prayer. I told him she’d likely fight this at first, but he should continue loving her anyway and showing it.**

**Six months later, she wrote me a letter. “It’s like we’re soul mates. Like a new relationship. We’re on a second honeymoon,” she said. After 18 years of marriage, it was like they had started over.**

**I want the same for you!**

## **You Need a Coach**

**Why?**

**I think there are several reasons that you need a coach to get through a marriage crisis:**

- 1. A coach will not be emotionally involved. You may have trouble seeing things objectively while your coach will not.**
- 2. A coach will ask questions to help you think deeply before speaking or acting rashly.**
- 3. A coach will encourage you. Sometimes you need a cheerleader because everyone around you seems critical (including you)!**
- 4. A coach will challenge or even correct you. Some of my best coaches told me off when I needed it most and that made all the differences.**
- 5. A good coach can empathize. It’s very likely that he/she has “been there, done that.” He/she offers understanding as well as the proverbial “light at the end of the tunnel.”**

**I have learned that coaching can be done one-on-one or in small group settings. With today's modern technology, coaching sessions can be done by video, phone connection, or in-person. The benefits above can be experienced via any of these venues.**

## **Let's get real, there are some downsides**

**A man gets a call from his doctor after an annual physical. "OK George," says the doctor, "I've got good news and bad news. What do you want to hear first?"**

**"How about good news," the man replies, "I'm tired of hearing bad news all the time." "OK," says the doctor, "Well, you have an incurable disease and 24 hours to live."**

**"What?" says the shocked patient, "Twenty-four hours to live??? If that's the good news, what's the bad news?"**

**"Well," says the doctor, "I forgot to call you yesterday...."**

**I'd be a lousy couples coach if I didn't tell you that there are some negatives with this whole marriage rescue idea.**

**First, it will be hard work. You'll have to admit wrong, embrace change, and learn a new way of doing things.**

**Next, you'll face opposition. Your spouse, and perhaps others too will likely make life difficult at times while you're going through all this. You'll have to stand firm despite it all.**

**Finally, there are no guarantees. You might do everything right, make all the right changes, and stick to it like super glue, yet your**

**spouse might still walk away. While we'll help you through it, you may not succeed in saving your marriage.**

**Are you prepared for the worst?**

**Your willingness to do the right thing no matter the outcome is critical to success—which is what we'll work with you to achieve. But if there are no guarantees, why use our approach as opposed to couples therapy or individual counseling?**

## **The Truth about Couple's Therapy and Other Solutions**

**To be fair, there ARE times when counseling makes sense and, frankly, times when I refer couples for that kind of therapy. Still, most couples seeking this treatment are probably not going to benefit.**

**Why not?**

**Well, most get frustrated by the fact that trained counselors aren't directive—they don't really teach you anything nor do they normally give you ideas to try, etc. They mostly listen and ask questions. Their questions are designed to spark your own creative or corrective instincts for real change. This can work, but it's often an expensive and lengthy process.**

**If your marriage is already in crisis, it may be too late for this approach.**



**If you're ready to make changes and pull this relationship out of the proverbial FIRE, you need instruction, motivation, and support to make real, lasting change!**

**That's where I come in!**

## **The Key to Rescuing Marriages**

**In this report, we've covered a lot of ground. Primarily, we've shown that even the most "hopeless" of marriages can be saved if one of you—in this case, you—takes the right steps. If you have the desire, receive the coaching and knowledge available to you and then stick with it till your spouse's "ice melts," great things can and often will, be the result!**

**But, we both know there's more detail attached to each of these key ingredients.**

**To that end, I've put together a webinar to answer the most common questions that I get and to share the three secrets I've discovered to truly restore and rescue a struggling marriage.**

**These three secrets are the CORE strategies being used by couples on top of their game—couples who, like all of us, struggle but have overcome HUGE hurdles and now are truly happy together.**

**I can promise you that while these keys are NOT what you'll hear in a typical marriage counseling session, they WILL have a powerful impact on your relationship! They are the same things being done by others in your situation—often with amazing results!!**

**And when you visit this web page:**

**<http://www.marriagesaverwebinar.com>, you'll see I've made it easy for you to discover these proven success strategies and decide whether or not to implement them in your marriage.**

**Get Your Free Spot Now Here:**

**<http://www.marriagesaverwebinar.com>**

**After you attend my free webinar course...and apply the “Three Strategies,” you will look back on this as the one day that changed everything...the day you started down the path to a joyful life of love with your spouse!**

**If any of what I've written makes sense to you, why not register now for the free webinar?**

**Warmly,**

**Pastor Joel L. Rissinger**

**P.S. If you are even remotely interested in seeing if this approach is right for you, check out the webinar right away. I often limit these sessions to just a handful of participants so that I can offer more individual training/attention.**