

“It Had To Be You” started as a personal journey to discover the ‘secret ingredient’ of what makes a marriage stay together ‘until death they do part’. I have had the pleasure of interviewing many married couples and asked them about their married life and their opinions of marriage today. The only requirement was each couple had to be married thirty years or more. During the interviewing process, most of the couples seemed intrigued to know why I would pursue such a quest. My response.... I have attended so many weddings during these past twelve years of my life and I have only seen a few couples actually succeed and become truly happy with their ‘new life’ as husband and wife. I began to wonder: is it society that makes marriage so difficult; is it due to a generation that places their own needs before others; or maybe it’s just luck! I am a true believer that if you ask enough questions, you will find an answer to anything that troubles you.... so that is why I started the process of writing “It Had To Be You”.

I would like to send a special thank you to all the couples for agreeing to discuss their courtship, and the joys and sorrows of their lives together. I thank them for their honest opinions about marriage today and the advice they gave for newlyweds.

Another thank you to my friend and co-worker in all my writing adventures- Bernie Bombardier. You are a talented illustrator and I always enjoy working with you and watching your creativity for each book come to fruition. You are irreplaceable and I love your sense of adventure and never refusing to take a chance to work with me on all my writing pursuits!

A special thank you and lots of love must be sent to my Mom and Dad for always believing in me and providing such unconditional support. From them, I can actually believe that anything is possible if you work hard, surround yourself with positive & ethical people, and never say ‘I can’t’. I Love You!

Anthony & Julienne Massucci  
Married September 1, 1969  
St. Lawrence Church  
Huntington, CT



Anthony and Julienne, or Tony and Julie as they like to be called, met on a blind date on July 6, 1968. “My friend Mary Ann told me about this nice guy her fiancée, Jack, knew and wanted to plan a blind date.” They explored the rides and entertainment that night at Lake Compounce in Bristol, CT. Tony thought she was a nice girl to be with and Julie thought he was very cute, polite and fun to be with too! Tony proposed on December 18, 1968 and they were married the following September.

“I wanted to marry someone family oriented, ambitious and thoughtful to others. All my plans for marriage came true,” said Julie. “I knew she would be a good companion and mother of our children,” Tony responded when asked what were his plans for marriage. Did they come true? “Positively, she is a very good cook and a mother. We enjoy doing things together.” “He is very thoughtful and always makes me laugh,” added Julie. “We talked about our future together before we were married.” “Yes,” Tony replied, “we had the same goals in life and it’s important to communicate to each other.” “Yes dear, that’s true,” added Julie, “I taught you that.”

So, if it’s as easy as communicating to your spouse and enjoying each others company, why do so many marriages fail? “You really don’t know your spouse until you’re married, and there may be things you do differently and you’ll need to compromise,” answered Tony. “Many couples don’t know how to compromise and talk out their problems. You fall in and out of love all the time and sometimes you get on each others nerves. You’re not going to hear bells everyday,” said Julie. “There is a lot of pressure today with young people’s careers and young people are a lot more materialistic. The most difficult time in our marriage was being in the military and being apart from each other at times, but we worked it out together,” said Tony. “Yes,” added Julie, “I kept thinking about the future and when he would retire.”

“The best thing about being married, I think,” said Julie, “is having someone to share life’s difficult and happy times with. It’s nice that you can still love somebody so much after all these years.” “I think it’s raising a family and growing old together, too! Whether it’s walking on the beach or gardening, we love being together,” said Tony. They both agreed their most favorite memories are those of raising their two daughters and taking care of their home together.

Any advice to newlyweds? “Remember your wedding vows when times are difficult,” said Tony. Julie added, “Learn to talk out your problems and say I love you often. As time goes by, those little annoying things that use to seem so big are hardly worth mentioning anymore. I guess you began to realize how quickly time does go by.”

Tony jokes, “when we were dating, I started to write a song and I was always going to send it to Johnny Cash. It goes like this: ‘I don’t know where I’m going and I don’t care, as long as I got you and you got me. We’ve been to a lot of places and seen so many things, but as long as I got you babe, I don’t care.’ I guess that tells it all.”

Jerry & Lin McAuliffe  
Married March 30, 1968  
Church of the Reconciliation  
Webster, MA



Jerry and Lin met in November of 1967 at Killingly High School, where Lin's mother worked as a library aide. Jerry was twenty-one years old and working as an agriculture teacher at the high school and Lin was twenty years old and on her holiday break from college. She was completing some errands for her mother and, while at the school library, her mother introduced Lin to Jerry. "I liked him...we seemed to be interested in a lot of the same things," said Lin, "but he was going home to Pittsburgh for the holidays and I was looking forward to making plans for the holiday break...with my friends...I really didn't give it any thought (our meeting in the library) until Jerry called me that night to invite me to the faculty Christmas Party....we had a great evening talking, eating and dancing at the Foster Country Club....Jerry and I talked so much that the time had literally flown by and we had lost track of it." And what did Jerry think of their first date? "For me it was love at first sight, Linda was special...it just clicked....I was swept off my feet by Lin! I mentioned to a teaching colleague the day after we first dated that I would marry Lin...it became a reality when I proposed two months later."

"We didn't do a lot of planning (during the engagement)....we just enjoyed each other's company and our time together (while dating) was precious....," recalls Lin when asked if they discussed their expectations for marriage while dating and their engagement. She added, "...it just seemed that once you were married, you stayed married to the same person and made the best of every day. We were young...I think with more maturity comes the realization that planning is a valuable tool in life...that life lesson takes time, a willingness to compromise and good communication between the partners." Jerry recalls, "...all we knew was we really cared about each other....and remember the time was during the Vietnam War and I wasn't sure if my number would be called...we didn't have long term goals..."

Also, adds Lin, "...once the children came it also helped to direct our focus and we started making plans...making plans for a home and some kind of permanence..."

"There were tough times....but we really wanted this thing to work..." recalls Jerry. "Oh yes," Lin adds, "we had moved to New York...away from friends and family which made us depend on each other and that cemented our relationship...and on New Year's Eve, Jerry came home to tell me he had lost his job and I told him we were expecting our second child...those were difficult times and we got along on a shoestring and enjoyed the simple things in life." Jerry adds, "...(couples today) do not devote the time and energy needed to make their marriage flourish....to resolve their issues together...to work through the good and bad times...a marriage should be seen as a major asset in your life and you need to continually invest in it by giving it the attention it requires...that may involve a lot of compromising and patience!" Lin adds, "Loyalty, courtesy and trust are the mortar in the foundation of a successful relationship. Couples need to establish their goals and plan how to achieve them. I think sometimes sacrifice is mistaken for martyrdom...there should not have to be a pat on the back for every instance when a sacrifice is made for the other partner...however, remembering to use words like please, thank you, and I am sorry is as important as brushing your teeth or eating well. Marriage is always a building process..."

So what makes some couples say we are going to get through these tough times, and others just seek a divorce? "I think you need to remember that the marriage is an investment...and investments take time and sometimes you see long-term benefits from your investment and sometimes you see short-term...I think we have a generation today with a need for immediacy, they can't wait and sometimes things don't work that way...between us it has always been a shared investment, and sometimes I think some people today don't want to commit the amount of time and effort that is needed to make it work...you need to always nurture your marriage and yes things won't always be good, but you keep investing..." Lin adds, "...our marriage was good- life was tough, but our marriage was always good and I think that's the key thing...you know I always look at marriage as a building in process, you have all the permits you have to go out and get and then you deal with the subcontractors-and some are competing. Marriage has a lot of competition-time allocation, children, money, careers, friends, extended family-all those things compete with your marriage and sometimes people are more willing to give the competition a bit of an edge...more so than that building they're creating together-their

marriage...that's why there has to be that commonality of loyalty and trust...I can't imagine how anyone would enter any kind of relationship without those two things-they build the foundation!"

"You know I think in the beginning of a marriage, the big issue is money," reflects Jerry, "...the limited amount of it and how will you allocate it and you don't always agree. And then there's intimacy and sexuality that play a role at that point in time, but then you get beyond this and there becomes a true devotion to each other...that commitment and as Lin said that loyalty." Lin recalls, "I've always taken my marriage vows seriously and it grows (the meaning of those vows) with time....and I think the most important thing we have always done is that we have always put one another ahead of everybody else....because this is what's permanent....our children are on loan and eventually they will grow up and have a life of their own....and we need to be comfortable with each other as a unit....I think young couples today lack a sense of humor and have difficulty finding time to spend with each other to laugh together-at the good and bad times-and realize they will get through this (tough times) together...they need to plan a little time every day to spend together, and only with one another, every single day...I think that's the most important thing a couple needs to do!" "I agree," adds Jerry, "a lot of couples I think divorce because they lose that connection and don't take the time for each other...they are so busy with their job, careers...and I think you have this 'me thing', and there is no us...and for me, the best thing about being married is that companionship and sharing...that someone would be willing to share her life span with me."

"I think many couples still think it's 'me' instead of 'we'...." adds Lin "...the routine, surprises, new adventures, planning a life together and seeing the best in one another are (I believe) grand ways to pass the days. Jerry and I are very different from one another, and our differences complement one another nicely....he has a keen sense of humor and during difficult times (this humor) can lighten the load just enough to help me realize that difficulties too will pass!" Jerry adds, "...Lin is a very considerate and compassionate individual....she always places the needs of others before hers....and again that importance of loyalty that she has and I have towards her...you know, no one is perfect, but when you can complement each other, I think that helps...." Lin interrupts, "...and we are always adding to the relationship...we are a team...establishing goals and planning how to achieve them together and always remembering we can always accomplish much more together than as individuals...we built so many memories together that we would be hard pressed to determine that we need a fresh

start...we are such a huge part of one another's life, it's hard to imagine not having one another..."

"They need (newlyweds) to take the time to get to know one another, have self respect and become friends first and then lovers," mentions Jerry when asked what advice he would give newlyweds. Lin adds, "you know you also have to remind parents to not always provide the end, but more importantly the means....many newlyweds start off with parents giving them everything...they give them the new furniture and not the way to build up to earn the new furniture...every generation wants the next generation to have something better- our parents believed an education would bring something better....unfortunately that has translated now into more material things and not so much the spiritual..." Jerry also adds, "...you know before you marry you have to love yourself, who you are, before you can love someone else and you need to have that friendship first (with your spouse)...you just have to set your values....I don't think there is such a thing as a perfect marriage, but the marriages that last are those whose partners talk things out...they are a team." Lin adds, "...you know you can disagree, but without hurting that other person...and then you can come to consensus on things..."

"Our relationship," reflects Lin, "is like a second layer of skin-we're comfortable within it, can't do without it, are willing to repair it and maintain its integrity, flexibility and intrinsic beauty."

Bob & Mary Louise Sylves  
Married August 10, 1946  
Our Lady of Peace  
Chicago, IL



As Mary Louise recalls, “We met at a tea dance at the Trianon, which is a ballroom and many famous people played there-like Lawrence Welk...that was the thing to do in those days...well I went with my girlfriend and my dance card was full...and I was waiting for the next fellow and he (Bob) comes up beside me and asks for a dance and I said no, sorry, my dance card is full. But he didn’t leave, he stayed and talked to me...and I thought he was nice looking...and then the boy I was suppose to dance with never came, so we danced and that was the end of that...I never went back to the rest of the people I was suppose to dance with...Bob had a ’39 Plymouth and he drove me and my girlfriend home...he asked for my phone number and usually I would give the boys the wrong number, but I gave him the right number...he called that Monday and asked me out and after that I don’t think we have spent a day apart...we met in January and announced our engagement in April and we were married in August on the 10<sup>th</sup> of that same year! It was a whirlwind...I was eighteen years old and he was twenty-two years old.” Bob adds, “...I was mature for my age...I had been in the war...I was very skinny too-I looked like Frank Sinatra standing behind a microphone...I was twenty-two going on thirty-five...but I liked her right away...it was fate!”

They married and started their family of four children right away. As the children got older, Mary Louise worked part-time, but “...I was always home when they returned from school...we raised our children-not like all the day-care today...that was important to us...” As far as having a plan for their marriage, Mary Louise chuckles and says, “...we didn’t have two nickels to rub together, we didn’t know where we were going to live, but we knew we wanted to be together and we loved each other...remember that was when the boys were coming home from the war and it was hard to find a place to live...but we got a GI loan and found a home for \$7250!”

“We never went to bed angry,” that’s important states Mary Louise, “...and we had difficult times...but we always had faith that something better would come along...” Bob recalls, “...and it seems with the arrival of each of our children something better did come...my life got better with each of them...you can’t go along with the other person (spouse) all the time, you have your own opinion...it won’t be perfect all the time...”

“We had the same interests,” reflects Mary Louise, and Bob interjects with, “you know you ask us did we plan and you know it was just meant to be, there was love and that was it...if we were going down, we were going down the drain together...” he adds with a chuckle. “Bob is a great person...you can feed him anything...” Mary Louise answers with a laugh when asked her favorite thing about him, “...and he is very loving.” Bob responds with, “she’s the perfect wife for me and we both have a lot of love for each other and care about each other...we’re friends and that probably is a big thing as you get older...wild love only lasts so long and then you got to have something else...I can’t think of anyone that I would want to be with more then her, it started that way and I guess it will end that way...today maybe many mistake what love is because when the wild times seem to cool off they look for something else...there is not that whole commitment (today)...” Mary Louise agrees and adds, “...if we had rough times we worked through them and today they say I don’t have to put up with this and they’re out the door...and infidelity- I could never forgive someone for doing that...but we (Bob and I) trusted each other and maybe today they don’t trust each other...”

“You need to believe in some religion too,” Bob advises and Mary Louise adds, “...I can’t imagine how kids survive today without having any foundation...you need that support...and you can’t think worldly things are going to bring you happiness...Bob and I always lived within our means, but of course we were Depression babies...sometimes I blame the parents with the ‘give-me’ generation, you know-you have to teach them to work for things...you have to learn the knocks in life...and you can’t start your marriage with everything your parent’s have now-and I think they (newlyweds) think they should” Bob agrees and adds, “...you learn pride when you work for something...we started with nothing...” Mary Louise agrees and adds, “and I remember being so happy during those times...”

Mary Louise advises newlyweds, “...you can’t walk away from an argument and don’t discuss it in rage either...and never argue in front of the children and never let them try to pull you apart-which they all try to do!” When attending weddings, Bob and Mary Louise always send a wish that the newlyweds have as happy a marriage as they did.

“Having a partner and not having to be alone,” that is the best thing about being married answers Mary Louise, “...Bob and I always made time for each other during our marriage...” “Yes,” Bob agrees “-that is important, because the time goes by fast!”