

She's So Slow. Tell Her to Hurry Up!

My wife moves very slowly. It is the reason we are late most of the times to everything. We've been married for over 25 years and I am really tired of always waiting for her. I wish she could move a little faster. However, every time I ask her to move faster, she seems to move slower. Sometimes I feel like I am going to lose my mind. Please help me with a strategy to help my wife move faster so our marriage can be what it has the potential to be. –Anonymous–Flint, Michigan

Marriage can be truly difficult. Isn't that right? Nevertheless, once you accept the fact that marriage can be difficult, the fact that it is difficult no longer really matters, as long as you trust God to give you the patience needed to respond to any situation with love. And, by the way, Jesus makes the promise in Mark 10:47 that, "...with men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible."

As we think about the situation you have shared about your wife, we cannot help but reflect on the fact that we are at the beginning of another year when many choose to make resolutions for the new year. We are wondering out loud what new or not so new resolutions you might want to make in your relationship with your wife of 25+ years, given the annoyance you have reported having with her slowness.

Right about now we are wondering if your wife has always been slow, or if this is a tendency she has developed of late. If it is the former, then it follows that during your courtship and early marriage you simply chose to overlook her slowness, given her outstanding characteristics on other matters. Of course, if your wife's slowness is something she has recently developed, you may want to check on her health, and/or come to grips with the fact that as one grows older, one tends to develop aches and pains in one's extremities, which tend to literally slow one down. And the latter may be an explanation for your wife's current slowness.

So, this is as good a time as any to make decisions about how you will respond to your wife, going forward, in order to maximize the viability of your marital relationship in this new year. Because, the truth is, the only counsel we have to share with you about improving your current marriage dilemma is not so much about what you can tell your wife to correct her perceived flaws, as much as it is about how you can respond to your wife to enhance your marriage relationship.

What we know about healthy marriages is that they are characterized by partners who tend to respond to each other with love, despite the circumstances that may arise from time to time in the course of negotiating life together. We have the natural predisposition to respond with anger, resentment, selfishness, contempt, criticism or disrespect to things we don't like about people we are in close relationships with; responding in love is the only assurance of being in a successful and satisfying partnership.

Thus, rather than being too concerned about your wife's slowness, we would encourage you to make a New Year's resolution—with the help of God, of course—to be loving and kind to your wife regardless of the circumstances. Also, that you will practice being accepting of her, just the way she is. The more you exercise responding to your wife in love, the more likely you will be to bring out the best in her, and experience the joy of a satisfying and happy marriage relationship.

Please know you and your wife are in our prayers as you trust God each day to help you be the patient and loving husband He wants you to be.

.....

WILLIE OLIVER, Ph.D., C.F.L.E., an ordained minister, pastoral counselor and family sociologist, is director of the Department of Family Ministries for the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church World Headquarters. family.adventist.org; hopetv.org/realfamilytalk
oliverw@gc.adventist.org

ELAINE OLIVER, M.A., L.G.P.C., C.F.L.E., a counseling psychologist and educator, is associate director of the Department of Family Ministries for the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church World Headquarters. family.adventist.org; hopetv.org/realfamilytalk
olivere@gc.adventist.org