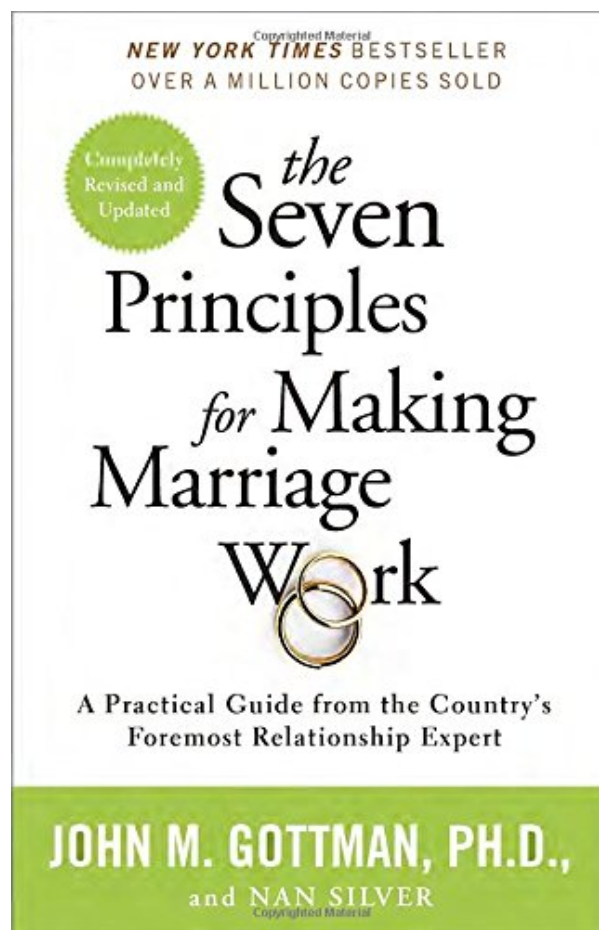


**THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES FOR MAKING  
MARRIAGE WORK: A PRACTICAL GUIDE  
FROM THE COUNTRY'S FOREMOST  
RELATIONSHIP EXPERT BY JOHN  
GOTTMAN PH.D., N**




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**Seven**  
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A Practical Guide from the Country's  
Foremost Relationship Expert

**JOHN M. GOTTMAN, PH.D.,**  
and **NAN SILVER**

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## Review

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## About the Author

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Packed with new exercises and the latest research out of the esteemed Gottman Institute, this revised edition of *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work* is the definitive guide for anyone who wants their relationship to attain its highest potential.

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currently satisfied with their relationship--to put extra effort into their marriages to keep them strong.

#### Most helpful customer reviews

79 of 80 people found the following review helpful.

Powerful, Practical, and Personal

By Dr Conrade Yap

When it was first published back in 1999, this book made a huge impact that shot authors and marriage counselors, John Gottmann and Nan Silver to fame, becoming their most popular book. Using interviews, research, and scientific data analysis, the authors begin with a startling claim: They can predict an impending divorce with a 91% accuracy just by looking at various signs. Moreover, they criticize most marital therapies as ineffective. They can recognize the four horsemen of the relationship apocalypse. They can also tell the health of a marriage by asking a few questions and observing the responses. Fortunately, they are able to come up with seven principles not just to make marriage work, but to sustain it over the long haul. In brief, the principles are:

- 1) Learning to enhance one's love maps
- 2) Nurturing fondness and admiration for each other
- 3) Turning toward each other instead of away from
- 4) Letting One's Partner Influence You
- 5) Solve the Solvable problems
- 6) Overcoming gridlock over unsolvable ones
- 7) Creating shared meaning

Filled with plenty of tips and advice, the authors know that marriage has far more complications in real life. In fact, one criticism of the first edition of this book is the heavy dependence on data and scientific analysis, just like a book having lots of theory but little practice. This second edition tries to correct this imbalance by putting their findings to work through the Gottmann Institute. Using direct support for couples, marital therapies, and training sessions, they have accumulated more statistics on the Seven Principles. They claim that couples who read the book without additional professional assistance "were significantly happier in their relationship." Not only that, the helpfulness continued even after a year. Updated for more diverse groups, the book now includes findings for same-sex couples, new parents, and mixed marriages. The questionnaires are updated. The statistics are refreshed. The numbers are crunched with consistent results.

Let me offer three thoughts on this book. First, this book speaks deeply into the issues of marriage. The way the authors have written show how much they understood couples and the marital struggles. Many of the examples given have struck a chord in readers deeply. The love maps questionnaire for instance, force individuals to dig a little deeper into their hearts prior to answering the simple Yes/No questions. It is not easy to simply tick off an answer thoughtlessly. They show us that marriage is not about "knowing" each other mentally, it is a lot more about connecting with one another at every level. While reading a book alone may not necessarily heal a marriage, it can certainly orientate any marriage more constructively. Second, this book is high on implementation. In other words, many of the suggestions are easy to understand and implement. While there are lots of scientific work and data analysis, one may accuse the authors of analysis till paralysis. That is not true, especially in this new and updated edition. The chapter on "Coping with Typical Solvable Problems" is a case in point. The authors take a break between Principles 5 and 6 to include some modern distractions like the electronic additions, relations with in-laws, money matters, housework expectations, sex, and the ubiquitous nuisance: Stress. Third, this book contains many packages of helpful tips. Those who like to have ready to remember strategies will appreciate them. Some of the more notable ones are:

Six Signs of Failing Marriage

Seven Week Course in Fondness and Admiration  
Stress Reducing Conversations  
Seven Tips for Listening to Fears and Sadness  
Two Kinds of Marital Conflicts: Perpetual and Solvable  
Seven Steps to Dealing with Emotional Injuries  
Signs of Gridlocks  
Four Pillars of Shared Meaning  
The Magic Five Hours

....

Even if readers do not agree with all of the principles, I am convinced that at some point in the book, they would be touched. I have read this book more than twice and are still amazed at the dynamism and wisdom of the teachings. This book remains my favourite book for marriages of all types.

Rating: 5 stars of 5.

conrade

This book is provided to me courtesy of Harmony Books, a division of Random House Book Publishers and NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. All opinions offered above are mine unless otherwise stated or implied.

36 of 38 people found the following review helpful.

Just In Time

By Rita

Read this book just when I was about to give up on my marriage. It turns out that there have been so many things I took for granted and this book helped me realize exactly what my husband and I have been doing right, what we've been doing wrong and what else we can do to strengthen the bond. This saved me from so much marital grief and frustration.

21 of 21 people found the following review helpful.

Great Information for All Couples

By K. Herawood

This is a fantastic book that is very helpful for all couples. The advice is very simple and easy to put into practice. I can already see a difference in our relationship after just a couple days of mindfully applying these principles.

I would recommend this book to everyone. I have already started telling my family about it. Even if you marriage is not in trouble, these are great things to keep in mind that will definitely serve to strengthen your marriage.

Dr. Gottman can predict divorce with 92% accuracy. He explains how he does so in a very informative what-not-to-do sort of way. He makes it very easy to identify things that we may be doing wrong, and he explains how to counteract those negative behaviors.

This book is easy to read. It is interesting and oh-so informative. Many self-help books are chock-full of fluff and filler that is boring and redundant. I honestly did not feel that way about The Seven Principles.

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What can make a marriage work is surprisingly simple. Happily married couples aren't smarter, richer, or more psychologically astute than others. But in their day-to-day lives, they have hit upon a dynamic that keeps their negative thoughts and feelings about each other (which all couples have) from overwhelming their positive ones. They have what I call an emotionally intelligent marriage.

I can predict whether a couple will divorce after watching and listening to them for just five minutes.

Recently, emotional intelligence has become widely recognized as an important predictor of a child's success later in life. The more in touch with emotions and the better able a child is to understand and get along with others, the sunnier that child's future, whatever his or her academic IQ. The same is true for relationships between spouses. The more emotionally intelligent a couple--the better able they are to understand, honor, and respect each other and their marriage--the more likely that they will indeed live happily ever after. Just as parents can teach their children emotional intelligence, this is also a skill that a couple can be taught. As simple as it sounds, it can keep husband and wife on the positive side of the divorce odds.

### Why Save Your Marriage?

Speaking of those odds, the divorce statistics remain dire. The chance of a first marriage ending in divorce over a forty-year period is 67 percent. Half of all divorces will occur in the first seven years. Some studies find the divorce rate for second marriages is as much as 10 percent higher than for first-timers. The chance of getting divorced remains so high that it makes sense for all married couples--including those who are currently satisfied with their relationship--to put extra effort into their marriages to keep them strong.

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