



By Les and Leslie Parrott

Do you two need a tissue?" a voice gently whispered from behind us. We were sitting in a quiet theater watching a somber play when — at the saddest moment — something struck us funny. Hysterically funny.

At just that moment, Les found

a withered old banana in his coat pocket. Who knows how long it had lived there, and he set this surprising discovery on my knee. Caught off guard by the incongruity of the banana and the play, I developed one of the worst cases of the giggles I've ever had. Les

quickly caught the same disease.

We tried desperately to stifle our laughter; but, as we bowed our heads to hide our faces, we couldn't keep our shoulders from shuddering. An older woman behind us, thinking we were moved by what was happening on stage,

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Once a day ... *The Love List* (if only for a Take time to touch Find something that makes you be Eight healthy habits of marriage

Once a week ...

Do something active that lifts you
Boost your partner's self-esteem.

Once a month...

Rid yourselves of harmful residue
Fire up passion in the bedroom.

Once a year...

Review your top 10 highlights.
Chart your course for the coming

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offered us a tissue for our tears, which made us want to laugh all the more. When Les accepted her kind offer, I really lost it and had to leave the theater.

Just another day of marriage for Les and Leslie? Not quite, but we do laugh a lot together. The tiniest of things can sometimes set us off — a slight inflection or a knowing glance, for example. We can quote a funny line for weeks after hearing it.

Better still are the unplanned faux pas in front of others that bring embarrassment. We have the same funny bone and can't keep from using it. No wonder we enjoy our marriage.

Laughter does that. Any good friend will tell you that laughter is the shortest distance between two people — especially in marriage.

That's why each day we find something that makes us both laugh. We don't wait for funniness to find us; we're on the lookout. We've literally put this seemingly silly task on what we've come to call our Love List.

We've always liked lists. Shopping lists. Honor lists. Wish lists. Lists of goals and dreams. Our favorite is the common to-do list. We live by it. Maybe you do too. And if so, you know the wonderful feeling of checking an item off your list.

With a simple check mark we know we've

accomplished something we set out to do. We've made progress. That little check tells us we've taken another step — big or small — in the direction we want to go.

Short and to the point. That's the value of a good list.

Research has shown that people who make a tangible list and keep it handy are far more likely to achieve their goals than others who have the very same desires. That's why we came up with the Love List.

As a husband and wife who write for, speak to, counsel and minister with countless couples each year, we wanted to know, in very practical terms, exactly what we, as "the experts," should be doing to make our marriage the best it could be.

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Not another tie!

**Ties change —
the pattern, width, color.**

**The church remains the same — believers
always need a meeting place — a "home."**

**Large numbers of needy congregations in
Africa need a "home" — a church building.**

**You can honor your grandfather, father,
husband, brother, pastor, or friend by giving an
African church a "home" for Father's Day 2006.**

**Needed: 1,000 gifts this Father's Day will
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Account. # 4651048 (40)

**Africa Tabernacle Evangelism
P.O. Box 2361**

Springfield, MO 65801



Honoring Dad — Making a Difference

How about you? Do you have some simple and intentional to-dos for your marriage? We hope so, but if you are like the majority of couples, you probably don't. Sure, you've thought about things you'd like to incorporate into your relationship, but like a flare that quickly fades, the ideas pass through your mind for a moment only to be blown away by the next breeze of routine life.

We've seen far too many well-intentioned couples — especially in ministry — yearning to enjoy their love life to the fullest but never considering a strategic plan for doing so. They are simply lulled into the mediocre marriage that never reaches its potential. So what's the solution?

The little to-dos have become our answer. And after years of studying couples who live and love to the fullest we believe this roll-up-your-sleeves-and-get-practical approach is for every couple wanting the most from their marriage.

The Love List — or the eight healthy habits, as we call them — is within reach of every couple. Let us allay some potential fears up front. The items on this list are not extravagant. They won't cost you more money. They aren't going to require inordinate amounts of time. And they are not just for the romantically gifted.

The Love List is not for perfect people. It's for busy couples who sometimes bicker, get stressed out, have communication meltdowns, struggle with money, are not always sure how to discipline their kids, and all the rest. In other words, the Love List is for real life.

• **Once a day ...**
Take time to touch (if only for a minute).
Find something that makes you both laugh.

• **Once a week ...**
Do something active that lifts your spirits.
Boost your partner's self-esteem.

• **Once a month ...**
Rid yourselves of harmful residue.
Fire up passion in the bedroom.

• **Once a year ...**
Review your top 10 highlights.
Chart your course for the coming year.

A few small actions — practiced on a daily, a weekly, a monthly, and a yearly basis — can change everything for a couple. Little deliberate behaviors quietly lavish love on a marriage. The List is for real life. Plus, it's fun. It focuses on proactive behavior you can do and you will see results almost immediately.

We did. When we made laughter a daily habit, for example, we quickly learned that it is impossible to stay mad at someone who makes you laugh. Especially when they find a withered old banana in their coat pocket. **tpe**

DRS. LES AND LESLIE PARROTT are co-directors of the Center for Relationship Development at Seattle Pacific University and the authors of *Love Talk* and *The Love List*. For more information, visit their Web site at www.RealRelationships.com.

E-mail your comments to tpe@ag.org.

ABCs

OF SALVATION

To know God and be ready for heaven, follow these steps:

A. Admit you are a sinner.
"There is no one righteous, not even one ... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:10,23
(See Romans 5:8; 6:23.)

Ask God's forgiveness.
"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Romans 10:13

B. Believe in Jesus (put your trust in Him) as your only hope of salvation.
"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 (See John 14:6.)

Become a child of God by receiving Christ.
"To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12 (See Revelation 3:20.)

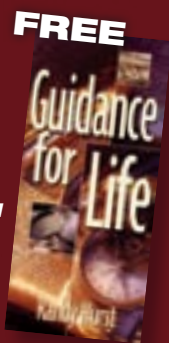
C. Confess that Jesus is your Lord.
"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9 (See verse 10.)

For further help, contact the Assemblies of God church near you.

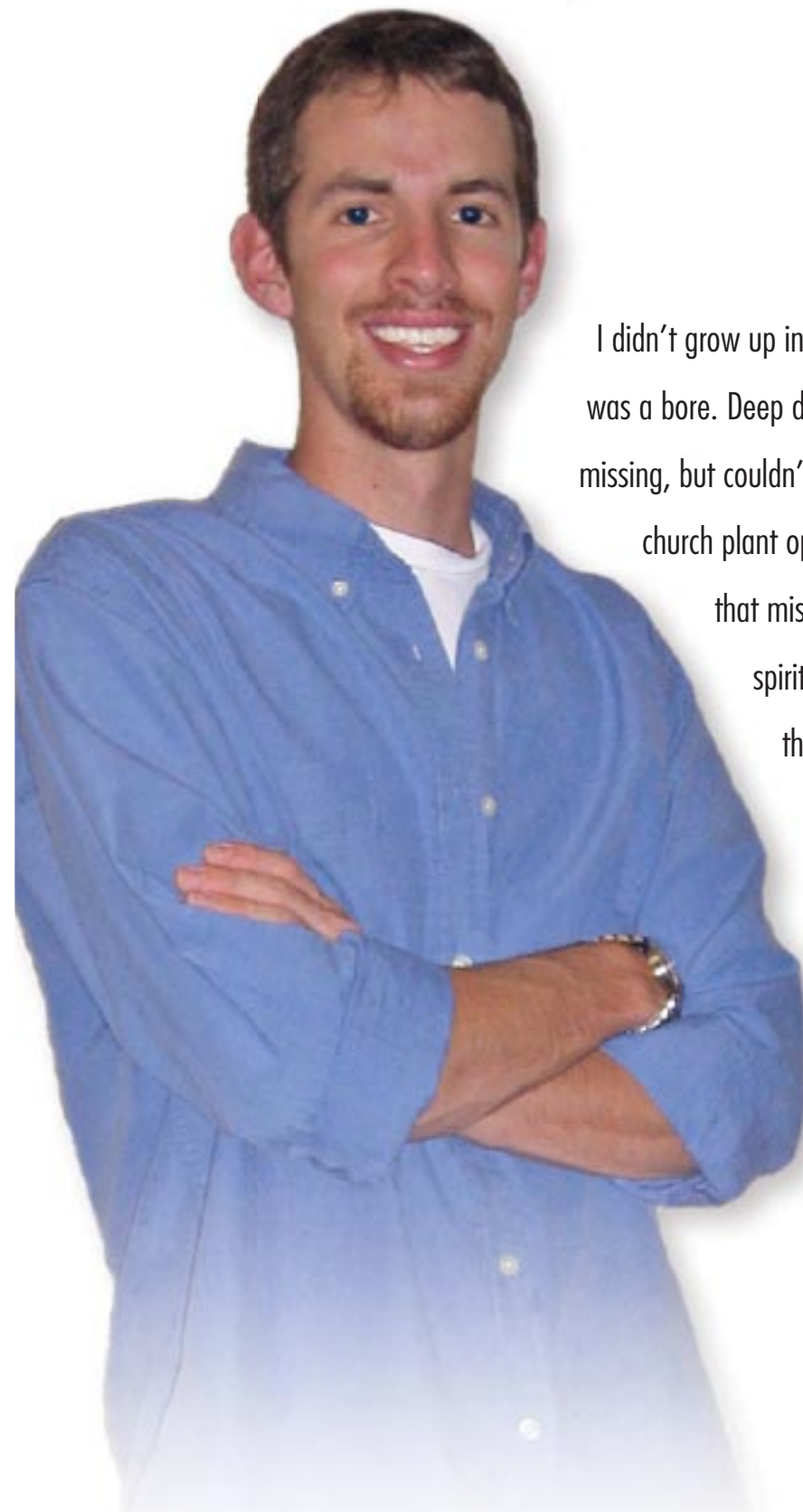
If you would like someone to pray with you concerning your decision to follow Jesus Christ, please contact the church indicated on the back cover or call:

1-800-4PRAYER

Assemblies of God National Prayer Center



REAL. RELEVANT. RELATIONAL.



I didn't grow up in church and, to be honest, I felt church was a bore. Deep down I knew something in my life was missing, but couldn't pinpoint what it was. When a new church plant opened in my city, I attended and found that missing piece. I felt a sense of purpose, both spiritually and relationally. God reached me through a church plant, and that is why I am dedicated to planting churches to reach others just like me.

For new ideas on how to reach your community ...
churchplanting.ag.org



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