

## HOW TO GROW A HEALTHY FAMILY

Living the Life You've Always Wanted – Part 3 of 9

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### 1. Provide a *secure* atmosphere.

Do our children feel secure in our family?

Do our children see our marriage as secure?

Do our children—boys too—get frequent hugs from us?

Do our children, and our wife or husband, see us as reliable?

### 2. Solve *financial* issues.

Willard F. Harley, *His Needs, Her Needs: Building an Affair Proof Marriage* (Grand Rapids: Revell/Baker, 2001)

### 3. Generously *accept* each other.

The Prodigal Son: Luke 15:11–32

1. Say, 'I love you.'

2. Use meaningful touch.

3. Spend time together.

### 4. Spend time together *communicating* with each other.

"She wants *verbal* attention.... If a husband seriously wants to meet his wife's need to feel close to him, he will give the task sufficient time and attention. I tell male clients they should learn to set aside 15 hours a week to give their wives undivided attention."

Willard F. Harley, *His Needs, Her Needs: Building an Affair Proof Marriage* (Grand Rapids: Revell/Baker, 2001).

"Across the board, physical weight, height, educational achievement, criminality, life and death itself, are on average connected with the presence or absence of a committed father." Norman Dennis and George Erdos, *Families Without Fatherhood* (London: IEA Health and Welfare Unit, 1993).

### 5. *Commit* to each other.

"I will be with you; I will not abandon you or leave you alone."

Joshua 1:5 (New International)

### 6. Share *spiritual* values.

"There is good evidence that the higher the religious commitment the more satisfying the marriage, the healthier the members of the family and the better is everyone's mental health." David B. Larson, "Religious Involvement," in *Family Building: Six Qualities of a Strong Family*, ed. George Reckers (Ventura, Calif.: Regal, 1985), 121–47.

Healthy families "have a high degree of religious commitment and strong faith; most belong to organized churches and have a religion that is a personal, practical, day-to-day experience rather than something theoretical" Nick Stinnett and John DeFrain, *Secrets of Strong Families* (Boston: Little Brown, 1985).

"Dear God, I would like to play a positive role in the health of my family. But I know that I need to surrender my life to you so that I can experience your freshness and forgiveness. I now **STOP** running my own life. I am **SORRY** I have been struggling along with out you. I now **SURRENDER** my life into your hands so that you can forgive me, fill me with your Spirit and do with me as you wish. Thank you for loving me, accepting me, and forgiving me. Help me now to be a positive person in my family. Amen."

Try reading: Gary R. Collins, *Family Shock: Keeping Families Strong in the Midst of Earthshaking Change* (Wheaton, Ill: Tyndale House, 1995).