



“Mawwiage. Mawwiage is what bwings us togevuh today.... Mawwaige. That dweam wiffin a dweam...” (Cue the Princess Bride)

If you think about it, “a dream within a dream” is an actual truth. I know women have big dreams about their wedding day; and maybe less obvious, are the dreams and expectations, both men and women have for the marriage. After all, didn't we both agree that *you are the one* I choose to spend the rest of my life with? Isn't it time for *our* “happily ever after?” Many years ago, someone told me marriage had its disappointments (gasp) but with those come some nice surprises. This premise has come to my mind many times over the years because of its truth.

In the Cinderella story, we recall the jubilation when the glass slipper fits her perfectly, but we do not hear about the quarrels they had later because her shoe shopping was out of control! Likewise, two people coming from different upbringings, households and family dynamics, will have different priorities, traditions and ways of doing things which, undoubtedly, surface after the honeymoon period.

On low days, when we are frustrated, stressed and pushed to our limits, we may think the grass is greener because an expectation was not met. See list below:

1. He works too much.
2. She does not cook.
3. She is too neat.
4. He is too sloppy.
5. I need more hugs.
6. Too much family drama.
7. We never _____.

Our spouse is God's gift to us. Our spouse is one of the “iron sharpens iron” tools that God uses to grow the fruits of the spirit in us which are “love, joy, peace, patience [not the ability to wait, but how we act while waiting], kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23.

Instead of taking inventory of your unmet expectations, take an inventory of the “nice surprises” you did not expect in your marriage like:

1. He enjoys cooking.
2. She does the bills.
3. He doesn't spend a night “with the boys.”
4. She is so patient with the children.
5. He is such a great dad.
6. He washed my feet when I was pregnant.

This week tell your spouse about the nice surprises you did not expect in your marriage and how you are grateful for them.