

The following Testimony was written by a couple that attended the Retrouvaille Program in Calgary in September, 2006.

When you first start your journey as husband and wife everything seems possible. Your feelings of being able to weather anything is so strong. Then as time goes by, things aren't as perfect as you thought.

My husband and I started our journey like any other couple except that we had a 9 month old daughter together and my parents were putting pressure on us to get married, so it was sort of a shotgun wedding or so we felt. Although we loved each other we were both very scared of the future we were about to face together with our daughter. I must say that we have weathered many storms. We wanted everything to be perfect but it wasn't.

I stayed at home with our three children until our oldest was 15, at that point I thought they no longer needed me as much and it was time for me. I decided to go to college and pursue my education, between college and raising 2 teenagers and a 6 year old it was a lot of work, let alone trying to keep our marriage together. While I was in college I received a job offer I couldn't refuse, a second income, how could we turn that down.

My focus was now on my job and how much money I could make and what we could now afford. My husband's focus was that I no longer needed him and he began to hold on for dear life. At the time I couldn't understand why or didn't take the time to understand why so it seemed to push me away the more he held on. As I look back now I realize just how selfish we both were. I needed his validation and he needed me more. I had lost my focus on the family and he had lost his as time went on. What started as, in my mind, a contribution to the family ended up separating us. I began to look elsewhere for validation and so did he.

We finally end up looking at each other and wonder "What the hell happened?"

When we found Retrouvaille it was at our breaking point. We were both ready for a divorce (how I hate that word). I just happened to pick up the Calgary Herald and was flipping through it when I noticed a piece on Marriage "Retrouvaille" so I read it. At that point I decided "we've got nothing to lose by giving this a try" so I discussed it with my husband as our last attempt at keeping what was left of our marriage together. I still, after 24 years of marriage, had no idea how much work we had ahead of us and Retrouvaille wasn't going to make it easy for us to give up. It's funny now

when I look back and realize that God had sent that piece for us to read, how he works in mysterious ways.

Retrouvaille was our first step into saving our marriage. What it did for us was helped us to actually have a conversation, which we hadn't had for a very long time. We have since been weathering the storms together and have realized that it was never meant to be perfect and that each day is a gift and if we can make it through today we can make it through tomorrow too.

There have been many steps since Retrouvaille but one that has been most effective in waking us up is an illness I recently experienced that left me without hearing. Luckily we have some very good friends who arranged for me to see an ENT specialist within a few days of losing my hearing. I've since had surgery for a Cochlear implant which will be programmed on February 1st. The results should be that I will hear again. The reason I mention my hearing loss is that we believe it was meant to happen because we were not listening to each other or to God. We believe this has brought us closer together and we both needed each other. Sometimes something good comes out of something bad.

It has been a lonely journey going from a hearing person to a non hearing person for both myself and my family. I've since realized that silence isn't so bad; it actually allows you to think and to hear God speak. God is a very important part of marriage and we had lost sight of that.

Our marriage will survive all these storms and our wish is that all couples realize that it isn't an easy journey, you're supposed to change and grow together and with the help of Retrouvaille we made our first step back to the realization that we will make it, we aren't a lost cause.

www.helpourmarriagecalgary.com