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The Road to a Lasting Marriage

Brenda-Lee Duarte, LifeLine Counseling Center

Twenty-two years ago this weekend something wonderful happened, and I don't mean the April blizzard of 1987. My husband and I were married. Obviously, things were never destined to go smoothly since my beautiful spring wedding was blanketed with about eighteen inches of snow. The priest who married us gave us the most profound and enduring piece of advice—"Remember to tell each other 'You're wonderful.' every day." And we have. That phrase has become our cue word phrase and is used to deescalate any major disagreement.

My husband was an Army Officer and we moved five times in the first year of marriage. We were married five years before we were in the same place on our anniversary. We have been through difficult times, through wonderful times and everything in between. We argue and make-up, we have grown up, but still have lessons to learn. But through it all, we have always been together because of our commitment to each other and our life as one. Our relationship has gone through ebbs and flows and has not always been perfect, but it is strong and it is good and we work at it every day. My parents will celebrate their forty-eighth anniversary in less than a week, my grandparents who also married in April were married for thirty-eight years before his death at the age of fifty-three, and my in-laws just this past January had their fiftieth anniversary. The secret ingredients are patience and making the relationship and the commitment to each other a priority every single day.