



# The *Secrets* of Happily Married Women

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Get More  
Out of Your  
Relationship  
by Doing  
Less

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MORE PRAISE FOR  
*The Secrets of Happily Married Women*

"Every woman can benefit through understanding how to bring out the best in a man. Scott Haltzman and Theresa Foy DiGeronimo brilliantly reveal this secret."

John Gray, author, *Men Are from Mars,  
Women Are from Venus*

"Finally. The first book that men will want women to read! Scott Haltzman has created a practical gem that allows women to focus on learning how to receive love from their husband. He advocates the Platinum (not Golden) Rule and urges women to 'Do Unto Your Husband What He Wants Done Unto Him,' so they can find the marital happiness they long for."

Jon Carlson, distinguished professor,  
Governors State University, and author,  
*Time for a Better Marriage*

"This groundbreaking book combines a pro-female, pro-male, and pro-marriage approach to life and couple satisfaction. It's very user-friendly, with shared secrets and research gems coupled with a large dose of humor that makes clinical points personally relevant and easy to relate to. The sex self-test in Chapter Five is an effective tool to help set realistic expectations. This will be a particularly helpful book for couples to increase understanding, acceptance, and value in their lives and marriage."

Barry McCarthy, professor of psychology,  
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"Scott Haltzman has made the deep secrets of happy marriage accessible, memorable, and inspiring. He writes with a light touch that makes the reading thoroughly enjoyable. Don't miss this engaging book!"

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8 Loving Actions That Will Transform Your Marriage  
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“This book delivers! *The Secrets of Happily Married Women* is jam-packed with research, ancient truths, street-smart wisdom, and years of advice from the psychiatrist’s couch. Page after page provides a sensitive, sensible guide to a satisfying relationship. Buy it, read it, reap the benefits. I’m going to.”

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**Sheryl P. Kurland, relationship/marriage trainer and  
author, *Everlasting Matrimony: Pearls of Wisdom  
from Couples Married 50 Years or More***

*To my wife, Susan, who has helped me be a better man.*

Scott Haltzman

*To my husband, Mick, who has given me a  
quarter century of happiness.*

Theresa Foy DiGeronimo

# Acknowledgments

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Yet I think that while declining the invitation to help write this book, Susan knew I could not have succeeded without her support, love, and encouragement. "Thanks" doesn't say enough, Susan, and no words ever will express my genuine appreciation.

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Finally, I thank all the women and men whose stories make up the content of this book. I had reached out to patients, friends, coworkers, and a large Internet community, and asked people to teach me how to make marriages great. They've shared their secrets with me so that I can share them with you. When you're done reading this book, I hope you'll share them with others; when you do, I'll add you to the list of people to whom I'm grateful!

—Scott Haltzman

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—Theresa Foy DiGeronimo



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# Introduction

In my twenty years as a practicing psychiatrist, I have worked with many women who sometimes question whether they are able to get through the day. I expect that. After all, people seek me out because something's not altogether right in their lives.

Yet in my medical practice and in my personal life, I meet women from time to time who seem to fit a different profile. They have stress in their lives, sure. They have bosses who are jerks, and their husbands are not clones of a chick-flick Hollywood hero. Yet despite falling short of enjoying storybook lives, these women still have a spark about them, an air of confidence, and a sense of somehow being able to keep their head while surrounded by all the chaos that circulates around them.

The most exciting thing about these women is that almost without exception, they are very happy with their marriages. As a marriage therapist, I have been eager to learn more about these women. Who are they, and why do they seem so together? As a scientist, I researched. I started talking to happily married women in my psychiatric practice. I examined medical and psychological textbooks and Internet sites. In late 2006, I launched

an Internet site called HappilyMarriedWomen.com. On this site, I surveyed women to learn more about the approaches to marriage—the beliefs they had, the ways they interacted with their husbands—that lead to feelings of contentment.

I had some experience with using the World Wide Web to research these issues. In 2006, my coauthor Theresa and I published *The Secrets of Happily Married Men: Eight Ways to Win Your Wife's Heart Forever*, which was based on contributions from over a thousand individuals who had found my site and shared their insights. One of the findings that emerged from the “Married Men” phase of my research was that women and men take radically different approaches to making their marriage a success. Men tend to talk about strategy; planning; step 1, step 2, and (brace yourself for a real shock here) step 3. On the basis of the message men gave me, I presented my thesis, which formed the basis for my book: Men, make marriage your job.

I told men that if they treated their marriages with the same sense of purpose, resolve, and single-minded devotion that they have applied in the workplace, they'd have happy wives and, by extension, happy marriages. The message resonated with husbands everywhere, who informed me that I had helped their marriages. It was like music to my ears.

But my ears also picked up another sound. It came from women, and it wasn't exactly music. Women also heard my message, and they loved that I was helping men do better at marriage. But when it came to my main message, many women disagreed. Take my interview with Robin Roberts on *Good Morning America*.

As I explained how I use my work skills to succeed at marriage, she reflected back, “You say, ‘apply the same principle to success in the job at home,’ but, you know, won't some guys say, ‘Look, I work forty hours a week; why should I make my

marriage a job as well?" I answered the question, but it gave me pause to think. Then I realized why the exchange stuck with me: almost every woman (and not a single man that I can recall) who interviewed me about the book raised the same concern: "Who needs more work?"

It became clear to me that women weren't just asking a question; they were making a statement. Today's woman has taken on the roles of full-time employee, social coordinator, child advocate, caregiver for parents, homemaker, and sexual partner, while simultaneously trying to tend to her personal needs, such as working out, dieting, studying, or meditating. Moreover, women have taken on the role of processing, interpreting, and integrating all the emotional goings-on in the life of her husband. So when I talk about treating marriage like work, it's no wonder women balk! Throughout America, I heard the hue and cry: women work hard enough! Don't give us more work!

Eventually I caught on, and realized that *The Secrets of Happily Married Men* works fine for men (better than fine!), but it just won't do for women. Women's secrets differ from men's, and it was the women who taught me that. As I listened to the women who found happiness in their marital bonds, I realized that although they had as many day-to-day obligations as other women, they didn't view their marriage as "work." Rather than view their marriage as another task to accomplish, they looked to the connection with their husbands as a source of strength and as a refuge from the stresses of everyday life. And, unlike husbands in troubled marriages, these guys didn't shy away from the emotional closeness that their wives sought. They were right there by their sides, in high spirits because their wives were happy. They all wanted to please their wives by being better men and better husbands (and—because men are

in fact different from women—were willing to “work on it” without adding any work for their wives).

Happily married women are the ones who know how, seemingly effortlessly, to shape the kind of loving relationship they desire. They have mastered the magic of touching a man so deeply that he wants to be more—he wants to be better. And you too have the raw material to do the same for your marriage.

You, like most Americans, chose the person with whom you wanted to spend your life. You sought him out because he had character qualities that you liked, he turned you on, he shared values with you, and he wanted many of the same things out of life that you wanted. You and he decided together that you would share a life, and together you stood on the altar and exchanged rings, till death do you part.

Besides the man your husband is, the love that bound you together, and the pledge that you shared on your wedding day, you have one more quality at your disposal to ensure that you can find the kind of marriage you seek: you're a woman. Without exception, happily married women recognize that their female traits are indeed a source of strength and influence within the marriage, and they use their womanhood to get the most out of their relationship with their husbands. Studies have shown that women have different brains than men, and these brains are acted on by a different array of hormones. Females have a more attuned sense of emotional connectedness; they are better able to express their feelings and have radar highly sensitive to problems in the marriage. Women have a wonderful capacity to nurture, support, and bolster others, not to the exclusion of getting their own needs met, but in a collaborative way that draws out the best qualities in husband, wife, and children.

The relationship that you've been seeking is all there, and (as the Good Witch of the North tells Dorothy) it's been there all along. *The Secrets of Happily Married Women* will show you the ways that other women have inspired their husbands to be partners in a truly happy marriage, and help create a stronger and more loving and lasting connection with your husband. You deserve it!





## Know Your Husband

When Rosa and Lucas stepped into my office for our last session, it was obvious that this was one happy couple. There's something in the way that happily married people look at each other and treat each other. They don't wear signs announcing their state of bliss, but still, everyone knows.

But it hadn't started out that way for Rosa and Lucas. At our first meeting, after routine hellos, Rosa began to explain why they had come.

She told me that she had met Lucas during a code blue at a New York City hospital. At the time, she had been a nurse there for three years, and he was a new surgical intern. She had recently ended a previous marriage, so was wary when this mild-mannered doctor struck up a conversation with her and eventually asked her out.

In the early days of their romantic relationship, Lucas was sensitive, warm, and very attentive and loving. This was the kind of man Rosa had been looking for.

"I wanted to know everything about him," she said, "what made him tick, what made him afraid, what made him happy."