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## Love Your Wife...Get Better Sex

*This is episode #108 of Stay Happily Married, "Love Your Wife...Get Better Sex."*

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Lee Rosen: I'm Lee Rosen. I'm your host today. Welcome to the show. I'm here in the studio with Dennis Yanke who joins us all the way from Kitchener in Ontario, Canada. We were fortunate that he was able to be right here in town in Raleigh, North Carolina to do the interview for us. We do so many by phone; it's a real pleasure to do one in the studio.

Dennis is a veteran financial planner and speaker. He's been helping couples with their finances for more than 30 years. But today we're talking about something different. He's here to talk about his new book *Love Your Wife...Get Better Sex*. Dennis and his wife Pat have been married for over 30 years. They've got three grown children. I'm excited to be able to talk to him.

Welcome to the show, Dennis.

Dennis Yanke: Thanks very much.

Lee Rosen: What got you interested in writing a book *Love Your Wife...Get Better Sex*? That doesn't sound like something the average financial guy would suddenly crank out.

Dennis Yanke: Well, my wife and I have had a great relationship and I've always been fairly good at listening to what her needs are. And so a lot of our holidays have been planned around what she would like to do

rather than what I would like to do and I've always tried to make it a surprise.

And so we had a great big one on her 40th birthday and when we got back from that it was interesting because all of her girlfriends phoned her and told her what a great guy I was and they phoned me and said, "Can you help my husband with this?" And the guys phoned me and accused me of setting the bar way too high.

Lee Rosen: Right. Everybody in the neighborhood starts to hate you after that.

Dennis Yanke: That's right. So the book was originally going to be titled *Romance for Dummies* but I thought -- as I got writing it, it just took on a whole different feel and so I wanted to change the name to make it more interesting.

And the title actually is interesting because guys look at it and they say, "Hmm, it's about the sex;" and girls look at it and they say, "Hmm, it's about everything else." And that's really what the book's about.

Lee Rosen: Well, and so that leads me to the question, is the book really written more for the guys than for the women?

Dennis Yanke: Absolutely. It really is a manual that a guy can use if he's trying to figure out how to reinvigorate his marriage. He can go through it and read it and come away with some good ideas. And it's set up in short chapter style with a summary after each chapter, some expected results and some unexpected results and two or three questions just to remind you what you need to do to keep you on track.

But it's also written for women because I think there's a lot of time women don't really understand how we think about things. And we get into trouble because they don't understand how we think about things. So there's a lot of tips in there for women to read to say, "Oh, that's what my husband was trying to do." And it's amazing how many phone calls I've gotten from women saying, "Now I get why he does that. It's nothing against me; it's just the way he is and I just have to learn how to accept that that's one of his foibles."

Lee Rosen: I'm really curious now. What happened on that 40th birthday? What did you plan? What did you do?

Dennis Yanke: Well, we decided -- I decided to take my wife on a trip. She had a list of where she'd like to go and one of them was into Vancouver -- to the west coast of Canada -- and so that's what I planned. Now,

she doesn't like to fly and she -- I thought I'd make it a complete surprise.

So I planned this about three months in advance, got the tickets. We had three younger children then, had to arrange for babysitting, change some doctor's appointments for the kids, changed a hair styling appointment for her. Everything I did on the QT and she didn't know anything about it.

And then I sent letters out to everybody that we normally would have invited to her 40th birthday party and told them what I was doing and swore everybody to secrecy. And then I told them where we were going to be on the day of her birthday, which was at the Whistler Chateau where the Olympics were, and gave them the fax address -- that's how old it was; it used fax, not e-mail. And so when we arrived at the hotel there were 35 faxes.

I walked in and I said, "Hi. I'm Dennis Yanke. You have a room for me."

And they said, "You're Mr. Yanke?" So they upgraded the room and champagne was delivered to us and it was a big surprise for my wife.

Lee Rosen: Right. You really did set the bar too high.

Dennis Yanke: Well, sometimes when you do things out of love and you do it with the other person's end goal in mind rather than yours, people just stand up and they want to help you. And I phoned a few of her girlfriends and said, "This is what I'm planning," and they were all up for it and they made things happen. And the travel agent made a couple of extra efforts that weren't required and it just was awesome.

We even avoided a speeding ticket. We were coming home and I was rushing to get to the airport and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer pulled me over and, "Driver's license. Ownership. What are you doing?"

I said, "Well, we just had this special weekend. I surprised my wife for her 40th birthday and I was a little worried about getting back to the airport so we could get home."

And he went away and did whatever he does in his car and comes back and gives me ownership and driver's license back and he says, "Well, congratulations. Ma'am, have a beautiful birthday. Your husband did a great job." And away we went. And apparently they

never let anybody go. So everybody gets in the spirit when you're doing something positive for somebody else.

Lee Rosen: Right. Everything around you is going right. Yeah, that's really neat.

So you're a financial guy. You've been helping couples with their finances and their money. And I think most of us think of financial guys as being more interested in spreadsheets than love and sex. What is it about the financial planning and work you did with couples that -- did that lead you to this? How did that play out?

Dennis Yanke: Well, probably the first hour of every meeting that I have with a client is spent with both of them without any financial information. And I talk to them about their values and what they hold dear.

And then I talk to them about how they spend their time and how they spend their money, which are two completely different conversations because if someone says their values are charitable -- that's their number one deal -- but they spend very little of their time that way and very little of their money that way, then they're out of focus with what their values are.

So I try to find out what the values are and often will find that the husband and wife have some different values and that's okay. As long as the top three values that they each have are very similar, it doesn't matter if they're in the same order. But what you'll find is the disconnect in a lot of couples is that their values are completely different. And if your values are that much different, you can't have a lasting relationship.

A couple of times I've looked at the couples and I've said, "Tell me, why are you still married?" And a couple of times they've looked back and they said, "Well, we're just waiting for Mum to die, the kids to get older, new job," whatever, right?

And in one situation I had the guy look at me and the wife said, "Well, there's nothing wrong. Everything's going to be all right." The guy looked at me and said, "Why don't you leave now. I'll call you back. I need to have a conversation with my wife."

Lee Rosen: Wow.

Dennis Yanke: Yeah. So it's -- if you're starting with those values then it becomes really easy to look at a book and say, okay, what's the disconnect between men and women? And how can we make that disconnect go away so that they can get back to being the couple that they need to be?

Lee Rosen: It sounds like on the one hand you spent 30 years being a financial advisor, but really you were as much a counselor as anything during that period.

Dennis Yanke: Yeah. My dad was a Baptist minister and he spent a lot of time on courses learning how to counsel and he tried everything out on -- I was the oldest so he tried everything out on me when he got back. And so I had a great role model to follow. And I didn't really want to go into ministry. We talked about it a lot but that just didn't seem like my calling and now I feel like I've kind of come full circle and this is my ministry.

Lee Rosen: Right. Is the book -- is it based more on the experiences of all these people that you have been talking to over the years, or is it based on your life? I mean, how does that play out?

Dennis Yanke: Yeah, there's a lot of my life in there. And I have a chapter in there on Mum and Dad and that's actually what started getting me -- it got me to the point of writing the book and making it not *Romance for Dummies*, making it something -- I know the title is kind of fun but the book is fairly -- it's written in a fun way but there's some real serious moments in there.

And it's about what happened when my parents turned 80 and we had -- Dad was in a home because of his Parkinson's and we had a surprise birthday party for him and all he wanted to do was chase Mum around because he really missed that mate that he had for 55 years. And she couldn't identify with him anymore because he'd left her alone doing his ministry thing and she really had a hard time reconnecting at that point.

And I thought, I don't want that with my wife. I want to be able to connect with her always.

Lee Rosen: Right. You went through the process of writing this book and kind of getting it all out and sort of articulating the strategies and I really like the way it's organized, at least for a guy. It appeals to my sort of sense of organizing and all that. I love strategies one through seven. But how did the process of writing the book impact your marriage and your life and your sex life? Did it change things?

Dennis Yanke: We were at a great place in our marriage. What I found is that the -- as I started actually writing some things down that had occurred and talked about it with my wife, it brought back some memories that sometimes you just kind of forget with the urgency of all of the things that are going on.

And our marriage is -- like, it was good before; it's a lot better now because once you write a book like this you really need to pay attention and walk the walk. It just can't be something that you do and throw away. And it's interesting to hear her start talking about some of the things that are in the book that we do do as a couple. And yeah, the sex is better.

Lee Rosen: She's okay with it? She was all right with you writing the book?

Dennis Yanke: Well, it's interesting. We were at a -- we both sing in our church choir. We're at this choir party and somebody turned to me and said, "So where's the book?" And it was one of those moments -- you know how all of a sudden a party goes dead quiet and the next words out of your mouth are what everybody hears?

And they said, "So what's the title of the book again?"

I said, "Love Your Wife...Get Better Sex."

Well, of course, every head in the room turned and looked at me and you could hear people going, "Did I hear what I think I heard?"

And I said, "Yeah, that's the title of the book."

And so they turned and looked at Pat and they said, "What do you think of that, Pat?"

And Pat says, "Well, it's interesting. When your husband tells you he loves you, it makes you feel really special. When he buys a birthday card or an anniversary card and he writes something inside -- he doesn't just say 'Love, Dennis;' he actually writes something inside about how he loves you -- it's really special. It makes you feel really good. When he writes a book and a lot of you are in the book and then he tells you he'd love to sell a million copies of it, it makes you feel pretty uncomfortable. But I'm really proud of what he's done in the book."

Lee Rosen: Right. I was hoping you were going to say, "Write a book and then she'll be really --" it's like, oh, all I have to do is write a book. Thanks.

Now, one of your chapters and one of your strategies relates to in-laws, which I think is a really tricky topic. And first of all I'm curious, did the in-laws topic come up as a result of your 30 years of listening to couples? Do the in-laws play a part in a lot of what goes on?

Dennis Yanke: It does because there's a lot of planning. As you're in the boomer age around mid-50s you hear a lot of conversation about Mum and Dad or mother-in-law, father-in-law, what happens and how they're relating. And so that conversation needs to be part of what's going on.

And it's also interesting to hear the number of back-handed compliments about the in-laws, right? In both directions, not just typically the guy not liking his mother-in-law; it goes both ways. And I think as I thought -- I was really lucky because my in-laws and I got along really well. But as I thought back to how I cultivated that relationship I always tried to do what was best for Pat. And her parents always tried to do what was best for Pat. So it seemed like we were always working together, right?

Our goal was to not just make her happy but to give her a healthy life, someplace where she felt comfortable, was secure and could spread her wings. And as long as I was doing that and her parents were doing that, we were very much in sync.

And I think that's where things fall off the rails when in-laws start -- they don't really like how you're treating your spouse; or you're verbally abusive; or all they see is the tension in the relationship, they don't see the strength in the relationship. And I think that it's really important to have that conversation with your spouse's parents because you really want them on the same team as you.

Because, you know, in a marriage you're going to run into some problems. And when that problem happens and she goes running home, you don't want her parents to say, "Oh, yeah. He's a turkey. You shouldn't be with him." You want her parents to throw her back in the game and say, "Listen, this is just a little tempest you've got to go through. He's got your best interests at heart. Talk it over. Work it out. Don't spend another night here because you're going back in there." And that makes such a difference in the relationship.

Lee Rosen: Totally different perspective. Because so often she'll go running home and they'll say, "Oh, yeah. We knew all along he was --" they'll just fan the flames, make it worse.

Dennis Yanke: Fan the flames. That's right. And I'm not saying kiss up to them, but certainly you need to have conversations with them so that they understand what your intent is. And generally the intent is the same because they want their child to be happy and healthy and secure.

Lee Rosen: Right. So the book is -- it's almost the perfect length. I'm sitting here as we're talking and flipping through it, it's 126 pages and it's so well-organized for -- it just really -- it's the kind of thing that

even visually when you look at it that it fits the way I think the average guy's brain works. I mean, were you thinking about that when you -- even the layout of it feels like it was made for men.

Dennis Yanke: Yes. I absolutely was -- I was thinking about men. In fact, I had a lot of comments from women like, "How are you ever going to get my husband to read that? You need to have pictures of fast cars and beautiful women."

And I said, "Well, I hope by the time he finishes reading it there's only going to be one beautiful woman that he sees, and that's you." And she actually got the point.

The point is I want guys to focus on their spouses, not on all of the other stuff that's going on. So that's why it's story format, short chapters, with reminders at the end of the chapter about what you read just to implant it back in the memory.

Lee Rosen: Right. Just looking at chapter names, some of them just really resonate for me, like the "How to Answer Trick Questions." I mean, I feel like that's a big part of all of our lives; we're always getting these trick questions in our marriages.

And you don't hold back. Just a sentence out of the book, it's like, "When that familiar 'oh shit' feeling hits --" I hope that doesn't jeopardize our iTunes rating. But it's just the way we talk and the way we think and -- it really does. It drives it home for guys. I think it really works.

Let me ask you this. Is there one specific piece of advice that you think is important -- the most important thing for married men to hear from you?

Dennis Yanke: Yes. I would say that so often women do a brilliant job of planning events for us. If it happens to be on Masters weekend, so how many Masters parties are there going to be where everyone's going to sit around the television? And even if the wife doesn't really like that much golf, you know she's going to organize a great party.

Well, what about two weeks from now when it's your time to reciprocate and there's this great fashion show that she wants to go to that's the talk of the town? Are you going to be there helping her get organized to do that? Are you going to go along with her and participate?

And I find what guys do a lot of the time is they like to celebrate with their wives the way they want to celebrate instead of understanding that it's so important to celebrate with your wife the



way she wants to celebrate. Because when you listen to what she has to say then you're just fostering this great communication between the two of you.

And I've had a couple guys say, "Well, all you're doing is playing up to her. You're sucking up so you can get what you want." And I would say no, it's exactly the opposite because when I do something that is for Pat, it's about Pat, it's something that she's going to do, that act of doing something for her is loving her. And when you're loving your spouse, when you're doing something for them, that's when you feel like you're more in love with your spouse.

Lee Rosen: Makes sense. Makes perfect sense. I want to get a copy of the book *Love Your Wife...Get Better Sex*. I know you have the website [LoveYourWifeGetBetterSex.com](http://LoveYourWifeGetBetterSex.com). Is that the best place to go to get a copy now?

Dennis Yanke: That's the best place to go. And I'm still personally autographing every book that goes out that way.

Lee Rosen: Cool. And is the site -- is there more to the site than just buying the book? I love the way some authors will take it -- you can connect with the author in some way at the website. What are you doing?

Dennis Yanke: Well, we've got a YouTube clip of me giving a speech so you can get a flavor of how I speak and see the man behind the words.

We also have a Dear Dennis section. So you can write in and if you have some specific problems I will respond and give you some suggestions on what makes sense. Understand, I'm not a psychologist or psychiatrist. I'm not professionally trained. But I've got a ton of comments since and so far it's been interesting. When I've answered people's questions, they've responded back with, "Thanks very much. I'm going to do that." Or, "That was really great. I didn't understand before and now I understand." So that piece is real good.

And I'm also blogging once a week on kind of current topics. So there's a blog site in there that you can go in and read what I'm talking about and follow along and make comments.

And if you have a story -- if you read the book and have a story that you want to share with others, there's also a spot in there where you can write your story and share that with other people. There's been some pretty powerful stuff that happened in there.

Lee Rosen: Terrific. So yeah, I mean, you read that in-law chapter and decide you have to -- you need some specifics on your situation, go right to

the website. Bing-bang-boom, you're talking to Dennis. That is pretty cool.

Well, I am just so pleased that you were able to be in town to do the interview live and in person in the studio. Thank you so much for being with us today.

Dennis Yanke: Thanks very much for having me.

Lee Rosen: You can learn a whole lot more about the book *Love Your Wife...Get Better Sex* at the website [LoveYourWifeGetBetterSex.com](http://LoveYourWifeGetBetterSex.com). You can even go ahead and while you're there read an entire chapter of the book for free before you buy it. And I have no doubt you're going to take one look at that chapter and think you need not just a copy for you but maybe a copy for all the other guys you know. It makes a lot of sense.

There's terrific stuff at the site. You heard all about it. Go there. Visit it. Check it out, [LoveYourWifeGetBetterSex.com](http://LoveYourWifeGetBetterSex.com). That's pretty easy to remember.

Thank you so much for joining us today. I hope you will join us again next week. We are getting so many terrific comments from folks, wonderful feedback about the shows we're doing and ideas for upcoming shows. We would love to hear from you.

We also have an extra copy of two of Dennis' book. If you're interested, leave a comment. At the end of the week we'll pick one and shoot a copy out to you. If you'd like to win a copy, leave a comment and we'll do it.

You can reach us there at the site at [StayHappilyMarried.com](http://StayHappilyMarried.com). You can also call our comment line at (919) 256-3083 and leave a message. We'll be back next week.

Until then, I'm Lee Rosen. Stay happily married.

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