



What successful marriages can learn from failed restaurants

As you likely know, the divorce rate for American couples in a first marriage is about 50%.
When you factor in the high numbers of couples who don't divorce, but stay together in mutual misery the track record for failed marriages is even worse.

The statistics for restaurants are even more grim.

Within two years, over 50% of start-up restaurants close their doors. Wow!

A significant number of unhappy marriages and many restaurants just limp along, their life blood and passion slowly sucked out of them.

What's even worse is that a significant number of unhappy marriages don't end in divorce and many restaurants don't end in bankruptcy. They just limp along, their life blood and passion slowly sucked out of them.

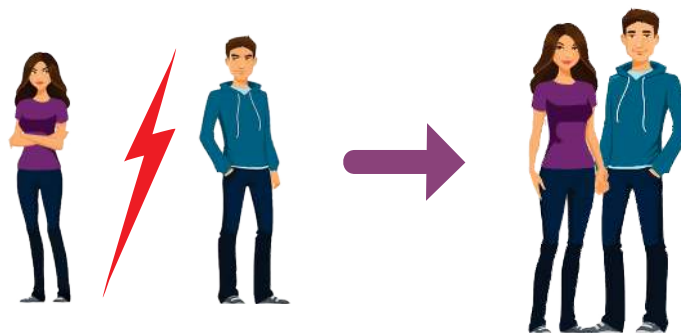
You might have a better chance of survival wandering blindfolded on the interstate.

I was recently talking to an expert restaurant consultant. She said a significant percentage of failed restaurants could have actually thrived by changing two important things.

1. Restaurateurs must change their attitude about what it takes to survive and grow.

- The common belief of failed restaurants is, "We have a good chef and a good product. We built it and they will come." That attitude leads to a deadly passivity about connecting to their customers — aka marketing.
- The expert continued, "I can teach them how to reach out and grow their business. I offer manuals, modules and personal coaching. If they apply proven strategies they can avoid the pain, disappointment and embarrassment of telling their financial supporters (often family and friends), 'Sorry, I lost my business and you lost your investment'".

The information she offers is logical and proven.



2. Restaurateurs must apply what they learn.

- Consistently applying newly learned leadership skills and business growth strategies is the biggest roadblock.
- Restaurant owners could actually put in less time and energy and enjoy their passions more if they consistently applied proven plans for personal and professional development...

My expert continued, "Aaarrrrggghhhh, restaurant owners believe they shouldn't have to do more than they are already doing. It's bizarre. After advertising the grand opening they coast. They believe after the grand opening they have done their job."

It seems a lot like married couples who have a grand wedding, exchange loving vows, and then coast. Their crippling belief is, "We have a great beginning, now we can coast on our love. I no longer need to 'market' to my best customer, my spouse."

It's heartbreaking. The downward spiral has begun.

It's so common . Countless couples enter our offices after years of neglect, emotional insults and disengagement, and actually think "communication" is their biggest problem.

Whether married for many years or newly on the path of marriage, **I write this to alert couples there is danger ahead.**

For a successful marriage beware of:

- Taking your partner for granted.
- Getting ensnared in the lure of work.
- Putting too much energy into the demands of everyday life.
- Believing you no longer need to woo your spouse.
- Scraps – giving your partner the leftover scraps of your energy and attention.

And especially beware of the greatest marriage destroyer of all time: the attitude, "Why should I have to do anything to make things better? My partner is the one who needs to change".

Where can you start?

Adopt the attitude **"Change begins with me!"**

You can realize the dreams that brought you together!

Planning **plus** action will get you to the promised land.

To your future success!

Dr. Peter Pearson
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For more than 30 years, The Couples Institute has been helping couples create strong, loving relationships. Dr. Peter Pearson and his wife, Dr. Ellyn Bader have been featured on programs such as The Today Show, Good Morning America, and have been quoted in The New York Times, Oprah Magazine and Cosmopolitan, and many others. They are creators of The Developmental Model of Couples Therapy, a model that teaches therapists how to diagnose, intervene and significantly help troubled relationships.