

The Importance of Wise Counsel

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By [Samuel Rainey](#)



Unfortunately, it's a common occurrence. Boy meets girl, they fall in love, begin planning their life together, get married, and come home from the honeymoon expecting happy ever after. Then some kind of pain happens, and it's as if these two people barely know each other.

I recently heard about a couple who is calling it quits after 15 months of marriage. They were young and ignored the counsel of friends and family to wait on marriage. They were encouraged to address some personal and relational issues. They didn't listen and married anyway. These issues flared up and created too much of a block for reconciliation to occur.

After a little more than a year, it's over. They didn't plan on this happening, nor does any other right-minded person who is getting married.

One of my professors in grad school taught a class on domestic violence. She was the unfortunate recipient of years of abuse by her husband, which began on the honeymoon. She told her harrowing story. Upon arriving at their honeymoon beach house (the only house on this Canadian island) he told her that she was his property and that she'd better start doing what he said or she'd feel his wrath. He began physically and emotionally abusing her that day, and it continued for years. It's a tragic story that repeats itself every day.

What we want to see in others can cloud us from seeing what is true about others. The engagement process gets so consumed with wedding plans that the relationship fails to grow or be seen for what it truly is.

At any point in your intimate or budding relationship wise counsel is your best ally. If the fatality rate of texting while driving a car was 50+%, I think that a majority of us would take heed at the importance of this stat and behave differently.

The sad reality is: This is true for marriage. The death of marriages happens at more than a 50% clip. The divorce rate offers a warning and caution that there is trouble ahead, and the outlook isn't all that favorable.

Assuming that one is teachable, wise counsel might be the difference between a failed marriage and a successful one. Counsel comes from friends, family, professional counselors, pastors, authors, and proverbs. Surround yourself with people who will tell you the truth for the good of your soul. Friends that find no fault or see no areas that need growth in you or in your significant other are either being naive, or they are lying to you. Telling the truth is hard to do, especially when it potentially threatens a significant relationship.

Prior to getting married, my wife and I spent a couple of months with another couple who was 10-12 years ahead of us. They offered encouragement and some warnings about how our fights in marriage might play out. We were too “star struck” and in love to really understand what they were saying. Not until 6 to 8 months into marriage did we understand, and that was only because we fought daily about needs, wants, and expectations (all of which this couple had warned us about).

If you’re considering getting married, now is a great time to seek out a third party that can help you identify potential difficulties. Find a relationship coach, couples counselor, or pastor who is willing to walk through 4-6 sessions with you and your partner. Pre-engagement counseling is usually more effective than pre-married counseling because once a decision to marry has been made, it’s my experience that couples rarely hear the warnings heeded by others.

If your partner won’t go with you to counseling, this might be reason enough to not pursue a marriage relationship. Insecurities that prevent people from asking for help are always going to cause problems in relationships. Refusal to get or accept help is a sign of deep insecurity that will manifest itself in other, likely more harmful, ways. Proverbs 15:22 says, “without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.”

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Samuel Rainey

Samuel Rainey is a professional counselor primarily working with couples, men, and women addressing issues of sexuality, emotional health, relationships, and spirituality. He is the co-Author of *So You Want to be a Teenager* with Thomas Nelson. He earned his Masters in Counseling Psychology from The Seattle School of Theology and Psychology in Seattle, Washington. When he is not roasting coffee, tending to his garden, or playing golf, he blogs about life process, parenting, and relationships at SamuelRainey.com. He can also be found on twitter [@SamuelRainey](https://twitter.com/SamuelRainey). He and his wife reside in the suburbs of Nashville, Tennessee with their four children.

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