

Your Labor With Love

By Leon Scott Baxter

At a dinner party a couple months back, I ran into Brent, an old acquaintance I'd known during my college days. It had been nearly twenty years, and we started catching up on each other's lives. Brent had become very successful. He had a beautiful wife and two daughters (two and four). He owned an insurance company in Arizona, where he lived in a gorgeous house and had recently purchased a vacation home in Summerland.

God, was I jealous! He had it all. When he asked what I was doing, I told him that I help couples with romance and their relationships. I told him about my new book, *A Labor With Love*, as well as my upcoming seminar, "Pregnancy and Your Relationship", both focusing on strengthening the bond between expecting parents before Baby arrives.

Then, Brent surprised me. All of the success seemed to leave his eyes, and he confided in me that he wished he'd had read my book five years ago. Turns out, although he and his wife still loved one another, they were in marriage counseling because they'd grown apart from one another since becoming parents.

"Why?" I asked.

"Because we lost sight of each other during pregnancy," he replied. "Life was all about Baby. And, we never got back to *us*. We're trying to learn to reconnect again."

Pregnancy is such an exciting time for expecting parents. It's filled with questions, anticipation and can even be a bit scary. You wonder what your baby will look like. Will it be a boy or a girl? What should we name her? How do we decorate the nursery? Suddenly, couples are no longer just couples, focusing solely on each other. Pregnancy is the first time for many to turn their attention to someone new... Baby.

But, finding time and ways to stay focused on each other is also crucial for a number of reasons:

One, we don't want to lose the connection we have with our partner, like Brent and his wife. Having a child takes time and energy from our partners. But, if we enter parenthood with romantic momentum, sure, focus will subside, but it won't disappear.

Two, keeping the connecting bond strong between Mom and Dad is vital to ensure that the family bonds remain strong. The most important relationship in a family is not between parents and children. It's between Mom and Dad. They are the foundation in which the family was started. With their cemented connection, the whole family is safe and secure. Without it, the family suffers.

Three, by getting into the habit of romancing your partner now, during pregnancy, you're helping your unborn child with their future relationships. No matter how we hate to admit it, to some degree we become our parents. The same will hold true with our children. If they are raised in a home where their parents' relationship is still a priority, if they see Mom and Dad holding hands and going on dates now and again, they learn how to have loving relationships when it's their turn.

I think Brent and his wife will get through this. There is no anger. They love each other and are both working toward the same goal. But, it will take work and time. If you are pregnant now, don't lose that connection with your partner. Like that baby in the tummy, foster it, and let it grow. It's good for you, your partner, your baby and your family.