

STABILITY VERSUS EXCITEMENT

By Christine Kniffen, LCSW

What are you *really* looking for in a relationship? What do most people really want from a healthy partnership? *Stability* is what most people want whether they know it or not. Many things in life are unpredictable. Therefore, it is essential that we create some sense of stability somewhere in our lives. This is *exactly* what we need from a relationship. Sure, there are no guarantees that it will last, but you don't need to be in a relationship that constantly adds to the world's unpredictability.

Have you heard your friends say, "he was nice, polite, has a good job, seems stable...but I'm just not attracted to him because he's not very exciting"? If you need exciting, then why don't *you* take up bungee jumping? This is your life and you need to create your own excitement. It is not the responsibility of your partner to entertain you because you do not know how to do it yourself. This is the type of pressure that often drives a relationship apart. If you are not comfortable in your own skin and do not know how to rejuvenate yourself with things that bring you peace, joy and excitement; then you will *never* be satisfied in any relationship. Until you solve these things for yourself you will always have unrealistic expectations that put unnecessary pressure on the relationship to give *you* what you cannot give yourself. In a stable relationship you have plenty of energy to work on you. In a roller coaster relationship your emotions are on overload and there is nothing left in the reserve tank.

Many people in long-term relationships will describe themselves as good companions. However, they *too* were not entirely comfortable with that word in the beginning. Have you ever met the couple that almost sounds apologetic for having a stable relationship? They will often say things such as, "I guess we are pretty boring, we like to stay at home and have good friends over for dinner". However, as time passes they become grateful for this "boring stability" when they continue to hear horror stories from their friends cycling in and out of bad relationships. *Most* people are looking for companionship on some level. We all want a best friend to talk with and someone to snuggle up to when we wake up in the morning. This stable companionship is at the core of most good, solid relationships. A relationship with a stable foundation can weather many of the storms that life throws us. If you need excitement, then create it for yourself. Be thankful if you have "boring stability" in your relationship. After all, you may just still have it this time next year.

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