

*FROM
THE FRYING PAN
TO
THE JACUZZI*



**GOURMET RECIPES
FOR A GOURMET RELATIONSHIP**

Vernon R. Bradley

From The Frying Pan To The Jacuzzi
Gourmet Recipes For A Gourmet Relationship

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The *Reference* section makes it clear how many wonderful thoughtful folks have influenced me. All their discoveries and “awarenesses,” along with my own life experiences, have come together in a unique and creative way in this book. To be a pathway for the Author with the Big A is a privilege and an honor.

I must make special mention of Virginia Satir. I was lucky to have attended her workshops and even luckier to have been a participant and not just an observer. I looked at her autograph today which I had forgotten I have. She is one of my Giants and continues to mentor my work.

Similarly, there is John Bradshaw who has been instrumental in my integration as a man, father, husband, therapist, and teacher. I was also lucky to have participated in his workshops at the time that one could actually talk to him during a break and get a hug from him at the end of the day!

And another one of the Giants is Robert Johnson, a brilliant storyteller and therapist, who literally embodies the spiritual mysteries of Jungian thought. His humility is his gift to me. I will always treasure having lunch with him at the annual gathering of the Redwood Men’s Center at Camp Gualala.

Then there are Folks, who I have never met, but whose wisdom lives in my brain. Julia Cameron, Jon Kabat-Zinn, Wayne Dyer, Daniel Siegle, and Mary Hartzell I have listened to Wayne Dyer’s voice on CD so much that I think he might recognize me if he saw me!

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INTRODUCTION

I have been telling folks for several years now that something different is happening with couples who come for marital therapy today, compared to couples who came twenty five years ago. And in July, 2007, while camping, I was inspired to write about it. We were close to the beach, and I was lying on my back on a large queen-size air mattress staring upward at the scattered clouds through the netted opening of our tent. To my delight and surprise, within minutes, the chapter titles began funneling from the sky through the tent's opening and on to the pages of my notebook!

The couples I see in my practice today really want to stay together. The last thing they want to hear from me or anyone is that their relationship is hopeless or doomed. I could almost say that they are committed to staying together no matter the cost in pain. It's not that they're masochistic or outright stupid. But they seem to be coming to an awareness that there is something pretty awesome about their relationship. They're coming to see that the conflict in their relationship is not the whole enchilada and certainly not a good reason for either one of them to abandon the relationship.

What's both holding couples together as well as triggering the at times intense conflict is a desire and a determination to live in a relationship that is characterized by equality and reciprocity and less by traditional roles, traditional expectations, or traditional norms. In other words, couples want to be in an EQUAL relationship. And it's profound that this is what couples are wanting and struggling to create. It means to me that our notions and beliefs about freedom, equality, and democracy are really trickling their way down into the nitty gritty of our lives.

Unfortunately, there are no models for equality in marriage or partnership. There is no Declaration of Independence or Constitution for couples to follow, definitely no "models" in the various media, and sadly, no direction for living an equal relationship from our pulpits.

From The Frying Pan To The Jacuzzi provides couples with some twenty "knowings" or "awarenesses" that will actually MOVE them toward equality in their relationship. For example, Know that you can engage without fighting or going to war!

I refer to these "knowings" as delicious pieces of fruit that we can pick from the Tree of Knowledge and eat or better devour. Thus the on-going "bon appetit!" greeting throughout the pages of the book. Each "knowing" unfolds, in its own chapter, into simple (not easy) and doable "exercises," or in keeping with the food metaphor, recipes. And because this book invites all of us, myself included, to really reach and stretch beyond the ordinary, they are truly "gourmet" recipes and the resultant relationship is truly a gourmet relationship.

As couples move toward an experience of equality in their relationships, then marriages and partnerships can be the models for society and perhaps even models for the world. The news anchors will be reporting, "Look at these couples! This is how people can get along. This is how people with differences can live together in peace and harmony."

In Chapter Two, I refer to a couples' commitment to their relationship as their personal contribution to the war on terror! It's meant to make the reader laugh, but at the same time,

I'm serious! I really believe that each change a couple makes in their relationship, no matter how small, has an impact on the big ol' world out there, sort of like the butterfly effect.

During this past year, I have been putting into practice these "knowings" or "recipes" for myself. I am batting somewhere between 250 and 300! There are several sections on page 21 explaining this batting average approach to life and relationships. The nice thing about even a low batting average is that it means that you are willing to step up to the plate one hundred percent of the time!

I have enjoyed so very, very much typing every word of this book. ENJOY reading every word!

And if anyone wants to write or email to give me some feedback, hey, please do. I will welcome it with open arms, the negative as well as the positive. Postal and email addresses are on the copyright page.

Bon Appetit!